

ISRAEL MY GLORY

Israel's Mission, and Missions to Israel

by

John Wilkinson
The Founder and Director
of the Mildmay Mission to the Jews

שִׁמְעוּ אֵלַי אֲבִירֵי לֵב הָרְחוֹקִים מִצְדָּקָה: קִרְבְּתִי צְדָקָתִי
לֹא תִרְחֹק וּתְשׁוּעָתִי לֹא תֵאָחֵז וְנִתְּנִי בְצִיּוֹן
תְּשׁוּעָה לְיִשְׂרָאֵל תִּפְאָרְתִּי:

Isaiah 46:12, 13

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INTRODUCTION

In issuing a Fourth Edition of “*Israel My Glory*,” I desire gratefully to acknowledge the goodness of God in so graciously accepting my humble effort to call the attention of His people to His own revealed purpose concerning His beloved Israel. May great blessing to the Church of Christ, the Jewish people, and great glory to the God of Israel, result from the reading and prayerful study of every copy of “*Israel My Glory*.”

It has been my life-work during the past thirty-eight years to study the Word of God with a special desire to understand His purpose concerning Israel; to get a clear and consistent view of the truth respecting the first and second Advents of the Lord Jesus Christ; and to ascertain the duty of the Christian Church in relation to the spiritual interests of the Jews. My college studies during 1851 to 1854 included Hebrew, Greek, Latin, logic and theology, together with a view to mission work among the Jews. From 1854 to this day much of my time has been occupied in preaching the Gospel to the Jews, showing from the Hebrew Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ. A considerable portion of my time has also been spent in expounding to Christians God’s truth about the Jews with a view to awaken Scriptural interest in the conversion of our Jewish brethren.

Though the soil has been hard in both cases, I praise His name for having given blessing, increasing blessing, in both departments for eight-and-thirty years. During the first twenty-five years I labored under the auspices of a society, and traveled over the United Kingdom at the rate of about 10,000 miles a year for twenty-two years, preaching and lecturing amongst all evangelical Christians. During the thirteen years—1876 to 1889—of the Mildmay Mission to the Jews, my personal labors in both departments of service have been abundant, and have been attended by much larger blessing.

During all these years I have been urged again and again, by ministers and others, to write a book on the Jewish question, but I hesitated, as my views for many years had taken no definite form as to the future of the Jews as a nation. Passages relating to the Second Advent and reign of the Messiah I had been taught to spiritualize or allegorize, whilst passages relating to the first Advent and suffering I was compelled by hard historic facts to literalize. I had much to unlearn as well as much to learn.

The Second Advent as a separate subject is not discussed in this book, for the simple reason that the doctrine itself is interwoven with the entire volume.

This book, then, is written in response to the earnest solicitations of many Christian friends; and further, I know of no other book dealing with the same topics and occupying the same ground. It is full of God's Word from beginning to end, and I have endeavored to write in plain and simple language, avoiding lengthy quotations from other, though excellent authors; eschewing learned notes and criticisms on Hebrew and Greek words as much as possible; so that all who read may understand, and that all who read may run to obey.

There is scarcely anything that humbles me to the dust more than this—my very limited acquaintance with the Word of God. My Lord knows that in the following pages I have honestly endeavored to write in harmony with His revealed mind; and that should He detect any serious error as the result of ignorance on my part, my earnest prayer is that He may graciously neutralize its effect, and fasten in the minds and hearts of His children that, and that only, which is in harmony with His revealed will.

The principle adopted in quoting Scripture to prove anything, past or future, is simply to let the Word of God mean what He says; that is, if the plain and obvious sense make good sense seek no other sense. There are three forms of language in which truth is conveyed—literal, figurative, and symbolic. The symbolic largely obtains in Ezekiel, Daniel, and in the Apocalypse of John.

The image whose head was gold, the ram and he-goat vision, &c, represented historic and prophetic facts nonetheless because the form of the revelation was symbolic. No one is in danger of taking the language literally, though the facts represented are literal. Figurative language is only the form in which the truth is presented. It does not represent spiritual truth as opposed to literal fact, but may represent the one as well as the other.

We say, "**a shower of blessing**"; the shower is a figure, the blessing may be spiritual. We also say, "**An army of locusts**," the army is a figure, the locusts are facts. "**All the trees of the field shall clap their hands.**" "**I am the door.**" "**I am the way.**" "**I am the good shepherd,**" &c. No one takes this language literally; but the facts represented by the language are very real and precious. Literal language speaks of men and things exactly as they are; thus Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Israel, Judah, simply identify the men who bore those names, and Jews or Israelites represent exclusively the descendants of the one man God called Israel, as the Ammonites, Moabites, and Midianites are simply the descendants of individual men called respectively Ammon, Moab, and Midian.

The same principle holds with reference to places, as Jerusalem, Zion, Olivet. Wherever Jerusalem is to be understood as meaning anything but the literal city, an additional word is attached, as "**New**," "**Heavenly**," "**Above**." The words sanctioned by the Holy Spirit to describe the elect nation and their earthly inheritance, we take in their plain, natural, and obvious sense.

All other nations are designated *Goyim*, which may be translated indifferently by the words, nations, heathen, Gentiles. The terms Israelites and Gentiles are not interchangeable, but are as distinct as are the peoples to whom they apply. To call Israelites, under any circumstances, Gentiles, is not less unscriptural than to call Gentiles Israelites.

How strange it would seem to find Jews appropriating promises made to Gentiles by name, and yet it is far from uncommon to find Gentiles exclusively appropriating promises made to Jews or Israelites by name. We must let Israel mean Israel, and Gentiles mean Gentiles, or we miss the purpose of God in the miraculous origin, history, and preservation of the natural and national Israel. Observing carefully this distinction the Holy Scriptures are easily understood, and we learn without difficulty what God intends to do with the Jews, and by the Jews in blessing the Gentile world.

Commentaries and sermons are still too largely characterized by spiritualizing all promises made to Israel and literalizing all curses denounced on the same people. This principle is unjust, unscriptural, and misleading. All the promises in the Word of God are made, some to Israel, and some to the Gentiles; if the Gentiles take their own and Israel's also, none are left for poor Israel. No wonder so little interest has been manifested in the spiritual welfare of Israel, **"still beloved for their fathers' sake,"** when the Gentiles have found only curses under Israel's name as the Jews' portion of the Word of God. The promise that Christ will be **"a light to lighten the Gentiles,"** is a promise to the Gentiles and not to the Jews. This is readily admitted. The promise that He will be **"the Glory of His people Israel"** will be fulfilled literally and exclusively in the interest of His ancient people.

"Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with His people," which occurs both in the Old Testament and in the New, gives the distinction between Israel and the Gentiles, and the relation of one to the other in blessing. On this simple principle, adopted throughout the following pages, of allowing Israel to mean Israel in promise, as in threat, in blessing as in curse, we get a clear view of the revealed will of God both as to Jews and Gentiles. Nevertheless, there is a legitimate use by Christian Gentiles of promises and threatenings primarily made to the Jewish people. What is that use? This is a most important question.

We say again—not to spiritualize promises and literalize curses, giving the promises to the Church, and the curses to the Jew; but rather to give the Jew the primary application of both, literally understood, wherever his name is mentioned or implied: and then, as the national election typified the spiritual election, apply in a secondary and spiritual sense, on the same conditions, to the Church of Christ, all the promises and threatenings standing in Israel's name.

"God be merciful to us and bless us, and cause His face to shine upon us" is an inspired prayer by a Jew for the Jews. **"God shall bless us"** is inspired faith in a Jew respecting the Jews. **"That Thy way may be known upon earth, Thy saving health among all nations,"** **"and all the ends of the earth shall fear Him,"** are promises of blessing to the Gentile world.

The *doctrine* taught in Psalm 67 is plainly the ordained connection between the blessing of the Jew and the blessing of the world, but the *principle* taught is this—in exact proportion as God's people in any age or nation are blessed of Him they will be blessings to others.

So that while the Church of Christ may legitimately pray this prayer, God bless us that we may bless others, she must not forget that the prayer, in its primary application, is made respecting Israel in the interest of the world, and that it will yet be answered in the future blessing of the Jew, and of the world through the Jew.

It ought to be unnecessary to insist that the following passages belong primarily, if not exclusively, to the national Israel, and only in a very secondary sense to the Christian Church:—

- **“Let Israel hope in the lord, for with the Lord there is mercy;”**
- **“And He shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities;”**
- **“Let Israel hope in the Lord from this time forth and even for evermore;”**
- **“Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation;”**
- **“In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory;”**
- **“All Israel shall be saved;”**
- **“O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten by Me;”**
- **“For Zion’s sake will I not hold My peace, and for Jerusalem’s sake I will not rest;”**
- **“And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace and of supplication,” &c.**

These passages, and a host of other similar ones, have been exclusively appropriated by the Christian Church, ignoring altogether the national Israel, as though the Jew had now no interest in these promises, and, indeed, no national future.

In the following pages we not only adopt the literal interpretation of Scripture in relation to the Jew and the Gentile, both as to promise and threat, blessing and curse; but we adopt the same principle in relation to truth respecting both the first and second advents of our blessed Lord. Two distinct advents are plainly taught in Scripture, the first in weakness, as the Babe of Bethlehem; the second as a full-grown **“Son of Man”** on the clouds of heaven. Is one advent to be understood literally and the other figuratively or spiritually; or are both to be understood literally or both figuratively?

The Scriptures relating to the first advent as to time, place, circumstances, in full details have been fulfilled to the very letter. Why should not the predictions relating to the Second Advent be also fulfilled to the very letter? Does not fulfilled prophecy throw light on the unfulfilled? In other words, is not sacred history the best guide to Divine prophecy?

Our only means of knowing that any prophecy has ever been fulfilled is by placing our finger upon some definite historic event that fulfilled it. All prophecy is history with God; and why not virtually so with us? Is it consistent, wise or safe, to say that only that part of prophecy which has passed into history from our point of view is to be understood literally? The first advent is prophecy in history; the second advent is history still in prophecy. Both advents are foretold in similar language to be understood in the same sense—its plain, natural, and obvious sense. The language therefore relating to Israel’s gathering we treat as literally as that relating to the scattering; and the language relating to the second advent we treat as literally as that relating to the first.

A few words as to the title of this book

The words *“Israel My Glory”* occur in Isaiah 66:13.

The immediate context is not only in beautiful harmony with the contents of this book, but is also expressive of the state of Israel—past, present, and future. **“Hearken to Me, ye stubborn of heart; ye that are far from righteousness. I bring near My righteousness; it shall not be far off; and My salvation shall not tarry; I will appoint salvation in Zion, for Israel My glory”** (Isaiah 66:12, 13).

Israel is still stubborn of heart, and still far from righteousness, except their own, which God pronounces **“filthy rags,”** They have been far from righteousness ever since they rejected Him who is **“The Lord our righteousness.”** God does not say He will bring Israel to His righteousness, but will bring His righteousness near to Israel, and it shall not be far off, and His salvation shall not tarry. He will appoint salvation in Zion, for Israel His glory. How beautifully this harmonizes with— **“The Redeemer shall come to Zion,”** and **“There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, who shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob”** and **“O that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion”!**

“Israel My glory” is a remarkable expression. Again and again we have the statement that God will be Israel’s glory. **“Thy God thy glory;” “In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified and shall glory.”** Their Messiah is to be **“the glory of His people Israel.”** “Here Israel is to be the Lord’s glory, when **‘the Redeemer shall come to Zion;’** that is, Israel shall be converted as a nation at the second advent of our Blessed Lord.”

The word for **“glory”** here is special, and means *ornament, beauty, splendor*. The same word is translated **“beauty”** in the reference to Aaron’s garments and the garments of Aaron’s sons (Exodus 28:2, 40). **“The garments were for glory and beauty.”** It is the same word in Second Chronicles 3:6, where we are told that Solomon **“garnished the house with precious stones for beauty.”** The same word in Isaiah 28:1, where Ephraim’s **“glorious beauty is a fading flower.”** The same in verse 4; but in verse 5, **“The Lord of hosts shall be for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty, unto the residue of His people.”** The Lord will be Israel’s glory, beauty, splendor, and will cover Israel with His own beauty and splendor, and of the **“faded flower”** God shall say **“Israel —My beauty—My glory.”**

The chapters (12-18) on “conversational answers to Jewish difficulties” is intended to help Christians in their intercourse with Jews, and to encourage aggressive effort for Christ. Should the Lord be pleased to use this book in giving its readers clearer views respecting His purpose concerning Israel; and also in creating or deepening interest—prayerful and practical—in Israel’s conversion, my heart will be full of joy and my lips with grateful praise. To Him, who says of Israel, **“My glory,”** be all praise and glory!

John Wilkinson
September, 1889.

~ end of Introduction ~

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CHAPTER ONE

ELECTION

ISRAEL’S NATIONAL ELECTION—UNCONDITIONAL; ISRAEL’S PRESERVATION TO THE END OF TIME— GUARANTEED

God’s purpose is to bless the world, to recover the human race from the effects of the fall, and to fill the earth with His glory.

This purpose is clearly revealed in His Word.

- **“The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea”** (Isaiah 11:9),
- **“The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it”** (Isaiah 40:5).
- **“Men shall be blessed in Him; all nations shall call Him blessed”** (Psalm 72:17).

Universal blessing is guaranteed by Him whose purpose cannot be frustrated, so that the combined powers of evil; though permitted for infinitely wise reasons to delay the blessing, cannot by any possibility succeed in finally preventing it.

The same certainty applies to the channel and instrumentality for the diffusion of universal blessing. Hence the unconditional election of Abram, and of the nation which sprang from his loins,

“Now the Lord said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house unto the land that I will show thee: and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and be thou a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and him that curseth thee will I curse: and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed” (Genesis 12:1-3).

“**I will bless thee**” is an **unconditional** promise; *“and thou shalt be,”* or, *“be thou, a blessing,”* is also **unconditional**; whilst the middle promise and threat are both conditional, **“I will bless them that bless thee,”** and **“him that curseth thee I will curse.”**

Kindness to the seed of Abraham will certainly bring blessing, and unkindness will as certainly bring curse; but no conditions whatever are attached to the promises, **“I will bless thee,”** and **“thou shalt be a blessing.”**

The grant of the land of Canaan is no less **unconditional**, **“And the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land”** (Genesis 12:7).

In considering Israel’s election it may be well to define terms.

- What is meant by the term *Israel*?
- What is meant by the term *election*?

By the term *Israel* we do not mean the Anglo-Saxons; nor do we mean the Christian Church; but simply and exclusively the natural descendants of one man, Jacob, whom God named Israel. **“The children of Jacob, whom He named Israel”** (II Kings 17:34).

The Anglo-Saxons as such, being uncircumcised, have a lower position than the national Israel; whilst the Christian Church, Abraham’s spiritual seed in a covenant of faith made with him in an uncircumcised state, has a much higher calling than the national Israel. But while, on the one hand, the application of the term Israel to either the Anglo-Saxons or to the Christian Church is both unscriptural and mischievous, on the other hand, we must not limit the term to the ten tribes or ancient kingdom of Israel, but allow it to describe any of the natural descendants of Jacob.

Jews of the two-tribed kingdom of Judah and Benjamin are as really Israelites as are the descendants of the ten-tribed kingdom, being all alike the children of one man named Israel. Paul, though not a descendant of any one of the ten tribes, was an Israelite, and though not of Judah was also a Jew. He says, **“A man who am a Jew,”** and **“Are they Israelites? So am I.”**

All Jews are Israelites, though all Israelites need not be Jews; just as all Londoners are Englishmen, though all Englishmen are not Londoners. By the term Israel, as used throughout these pages, we mean the natural descendants of Jacob, whom God named Israel; so much for the term Israel.

What is meant by the term *Election*?

Election is simply *choice*, or the act of choosing by voluntary preference to any office or mission as the election of a Lord Mayor, a Member of Parliament, or the choice of a secretary or president of an association.

The Scriptural view of election has reference to Divine choice. There is an election or Divine choice of individuals to eternal life in Christ Jesus, **“Chosen in Him before the foundation of the world”** (Ephesians 1:4). The Lord Jesus says, **“Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you”** (John 15:16). **“Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace”** (Romans 11:5). But this is *individual election* within the sphere of *spiritual interests*, affecting the *soul’s eternal destiny*.

Israel's election is equally a matter of Divine choice, but the sphere of that election is *time* and affects necessarily only *temporal interests*. In *national* election the wicked often largely share in the temporal blessings of the righteous; and the righteous also largely share in the calamities of the wicked.

The descendants then of the twelve sons of Jacob, called Israel, and who are most fitly termed Israelites, have been chosen or elected by God for some specific purpose, as the result of the infinite wisdom of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will; and who has declared, **"This people have I formed for Myself, they shall shew forth My praise"** (Isaiah 43:21). Thus Nehemiah says, **"Thou art the Lord God who didst choose Abram . . . and gavest him the name of Abraham"** (Nehemiah 9:7). Stephen also testifies, **"The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Haran, and said unto him, Get thee out of thy land, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall show thee"** (Acts 7:2, 3). And the Lord said, **"Shall I hide from Abraham that which I do, seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?"** (Genesis 18:17, 18).

The leading promises associated with Abraham's call or election are, blessing for Abraham himself, blessing on all who bless him, and blessing through him and through his seed on all nations. In order that this **"great and mighty nation"** may fulfil its high destiny, the Lord makes a grant of land to Abraham, secured to him and to his seed by a perpetual covenant for an everlasting possession (See Genesis 17:7, 8).

To Isaac these promises are renewed. **"I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee and unto thy seed I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath which I sware unto Abraham thy father . . . and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed"** (Genesis 26:3, 4).

They are confirmed to Jacob. **"I am the Lord, the God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac; the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; . . . and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed"** (Genesis 28:13, 14).

In the changing of Jacob's name to Israel, his sons became children of Israel and their descendants Israelites.

We have now in Jacob's sons, as heads of tribes, a broad foundation laid for the development of the nation, the line no longer being confined to one single family. These **"Children of Israel,"** as we shall now designate them, leave the Promised Land and become comfortably located in the land of Egypt, where jealousy of their number and influence converts the Egyptians into oppressors and persecutors. The sighs and cries of the children of Israel are regarded by God. **"And God heard their groaning, and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. And God saw the children of Israel, and God took knowledge of them"** (Exodus 2:24, 25).

These **"Children of Israel"** are now taken as a people.

“Say unto the children of Israel, I am the Lord . . . and I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments: and I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God . . . And I will bring you in unto the land concerning which I lifted up my hand to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob I and I will give it you for a heritage” (Exodus 6:6-8).

They are now a politically redeemed *people*, and as a *people* are separated from all others as God’s own. **“Ye shall be holy unto me: for I the Lord am holy, and have severed you from the other people, that ye should be Mine”** (Leviticus 20:26).

Their perpetual separation is guaranteed. **“Lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations”** (Numbers 23:9). They are also to be above all other nations in praise and honour; a chosen, holy, and peculiar people. **“For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God, and the Lord hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto Himself, above all the nations that are upon the earth”** (Deuteronomy 14:2).

They are a redeemed people, to be unto God a people for ever. **“And what one nation in the earth is like thy people, even like Israel, whom God went to redeem for a people to himself, and to make him a name, and to do for you great things and terrible, for thy land, before thy people, which thou redeemedst to thee from Egypt, from the nations and their gods? For thou hast confirmed to thyself thy people Israel to be a people unto thee for ever: and thou, LORD, art become their God”** (II Samuel 7:23, 24).

Just as the land is given to be the people’s inheritance, so the people have been taken by God for His inheritance. **“The Lord hath taken you . . . to be unto Him a people of inheritance.”** **“That good land which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance”** (Deuteronomy 4:20, 21).

We have now sufficiently traced the development of the nation of Israel from the call of Abraham, through his son Isaac, and his grandson Jacob, to the descendants of the twelve sons of Jacob, as heads of tribes; constituting an elect, redeemed, separated, protected, preserved, and honored people, with a mission of distinguished service in the interest of the human race and for the glory of the Lord.

The leading characteristic of Israel’s national election is, that it is **unconditional**. Were it otherwise, we should have looked for, not simply temporary national calamity as the result of the nation’s sin, but total extinction, and Israel’s mission annulled. The purposes of Israel’s election must be secured against all contingencies, and those purposes are as secure as is the immutability of His counsel, **“for the gifts and calling of God are without repentance”** (Romans 11:29)—amongst such **“gifts and calling”** are the gift of Palestine and the call or election of Israel.

Unconditional—not because they were *numerous*.

“For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth.

“The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers”
(Deuteronomy 7:6-8).

Not because they were righteous. **“Speak not thou in thine heart . . . saying, For my righteousness the LORD hath brought me in to possess this land: but for the wickedness of these nations the LORD doth drive them out from before thee. Not for thy righteousness, or for the uprightness of thine heart, dost thou go to possess their land: but for the wickedness of these nations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee, and that he may perform the word which the LORD sware unto thy fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Understand therefore, that the LORD thy God giveth thee not this good land to possess it for thy righteousness; for thou art a stiffnecked people”** (Deuteronomy 9:4-6).

As the election of the nation and the gift of the land were, in the first instance, unconditional, so the final restoration and blessing of the nation are also unconditional. **“Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went.” “Not for your sakes do I this, saith the Lord GOD, be it known unto you: be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel”** (Ezekiel 36:22, 32).

- The election of Israel is also perpetual.
- The election was confirmed by an everlasting covenant, and the land given for an everlasting possession.
- Israel's preservation as a distinct people is guaranteed in the simplest, clearest, and strongest language.

“Thus saith the LORD, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The LORD of hosts is his name: If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the LORD, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever. Thus saith the LORD; If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the LORD” (Jeremiah 31:35-37).

“Considerest thou not what this people have spoken, saying, The two families which the LORD hath chosen, he hath even cast them off? thus they have despised my people, that they should be no more a nation before them. Thus saith the LORD; If my covenant be not with day and night, and if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth; Then will I cast away the seed of Jacob, and David my servant, so that I will not take any of his seed to be rulers over the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: for I will cause their captivity to return, and have mercy on them” (Jeremiah 33:24-26).

The above passages just quoted from the prophecies of Ezekiel and Jeremiah, as their contexts plainly show, bring us down to the period of Israel's final restoration and national conversion preparatory to the opening of the millennial era.

As Israel's beneficent mission will not be accomplished till the close of the millennium, their preservation as a distinct nation is guaranteed until their mission is accomplished.

“For as the new heavens and the new earth (millennial) which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the LORD, so shall your seed and your name remain” (Isaiah 66:22).

But it may be asked if the covenant confirming the election and mission of Israel be an everlasting covenant, and guaranteeing Palestine as an everlasting possession, why has the elect nation been dispossessed of the land for so many ages? The answer is plain. The nation was brought under another covenant, a *conditional* one, at Mount Sinai: obedience to the law then given was made the condition of *continued possession*.

“The LORD our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. The LORD made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, even us, who are all of us here alive this day” (Deuteronomy 5:2, 3).

The disobedience of the elect nation has interrupted the possession and enjoyment of their inheritance, but has not deprived them of their right to the land as an unconditional gift from God. The present condition of the nation is represented rather by *interrupted communion* than by *severed union*.

The nation of Israel—a type of the Church of Christ—is as really one in the mind and purpose of God as is the Church—the antitype; so that we need not be surprised to find sacrifices offered for the whole twelve tribes, as recorded twice in the Book of Ezra, even though a very partial restoration from Babylonish captivity had taken place (Ezra 6:16, 17; 8:35).

Thus before the original purpose of God through Israel in the blessing of all nations can be realized, the scattered tribes of Israel must become one united people and nation in the possession of their ancient inheritance.

“Thus saith the LORD God: Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land: and I will make them *one nation* in the land, upon the mountains of Israel, and *one king* shall be king to them all: and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all . . .

“And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob My servant, wherein your fathers dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, even they, and their children, and their children's children for ever: and My servant David shall be their prince for ever. Moreover, I will make a covenant of peace with them: it shall be an everlasting covenant with them: and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set My sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore. My tabernacle also shall be with them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. And the *heathen shall know* that I the LORD do sanctify Israel, when My sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore” (Ezekiel 37:21, 22, 25-28).

The simple believer in the word of the living God feels no surprise whatever that a nation originated and developed under such exceptional and miraculous circumstances, and for so divine a purpose, should have its preservation guaranteed until its mission of universal blessing has been fully accomplished.

“Judah shall dwell for ever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation” (Joel 3:20).

“He hath remembered His covenant for ever, the word which he commanded to a *thousand generations*” (Psalm 105:8).

The national election of Israel is unconditional, and the existence of the nation guaranteed to the end of time.

The history of the Jewish nation, and God’s dealings with that nation, illustrate the principles of the moral government of God.

Israel is a grand object lesson for all nations and for all time. The national election of Israel typifies the election of the Church; circumcision in the flesh is typical of faith in Christ; the former is essential to the privileges of the national election, the latter essential to the enjoyment of spiritual blessings in Christ. The nearness and dearness of the marriage tie between the national Israel and the Lord God illustrate the nearness and dearness of the relationship subsisting between the Church and her Head, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Sin in the Jewish nation has interrupted national communion, just as sin interrupts spiritual communion in the Christian. The national election of Israel is unconditional, and the spiritual election of the believer in Christ is all of grace. Indeed, Israel and the Church are so linked together as type and antitype that to loosen the foundations of faith in the national future of Israel would equally loosen the foundations of faith in the future security of the believer in Christ.

The preservation of Israel as a nation throughout time is no less secure than is the salvation of the believer in Christ throughout eternity.

“Remember me, O Lord, with the favour that thou bearest unto *Thy people*; O visit me with Thy salvation: That I may see the good of Thy chosen, that I may rejoice in the gladness of Thy nation, that I may glory with thine inheritance” (Psalm 106:4, 5).

~ end of chapter 1 ~

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“ISRAEL MY GLORY”

Israel’s Mission, and Missions to Israel

by

John Wilkinson

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CHAPTER TWO

THE PROMISES TO THE FATHERS, NEITHER ANNULLED NOR TRANSFERRED, BUT CONFIRMED BY CHRIST

It has been hastily thought by many devout and intelligent Christians, and even by entire sections of the Christian Church, that the purpose of God to bless the world through Abraham’s natural seed has been changed in consequence of Israel’s national rejection of the Lord Jesus Christ as the Messiah. That Israel’s position is lost, her privileges forfeited, and her mission transferred to the Church, commonly but unscripturally designated a *Spiritual Israel*—in short, that this so-called spiritual Israel has superseded the national Israel as an instrumentality for blessing the world. Let us see how this looks in the light of the Word of God.

“**The promises made unto the fathers**”—What are they?

To the father of the elect nation God promised,

- **“I will make of thee a great nation;”**
- **“I will bless thee;”** and **“make thy name great;”** and **“thou shalt be a blessing;”**
- **“I will bless them that bless thee,”** **“and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed.”**
- **“Unto thy seed will I give this land”** (Genesis 12:2, 3, 7).

These promises are without conditions, and therefore absolute; they are God’s promises, and therefore sure.

These promises were ratified by covenant resting on accepted sacrifice, as recorded in the fifteenth of Genesis. Abram had no child. He thought his Damascus servant Eliezer, must be his heir. No, saith the Lord, **“This man shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir.”** **“And he believed in the LORD; and He counted it to him for righteousness”** (Genesis 15:4, 6).

From this transaction dates the Covenant of faith made with Abram years before he was circumcised, which will be referred to in subsequent pages. In this covenant Abram becomes the father of all believers—circumcised and uncircumcised.

The Lord attached much importance to Abram's faith, because Isaac, in the circumstances of his birth, was destined to furnish a type of God's beloved Son, in the aspect of His miraculous birth; for Isaac's birth was a miracle as real as was the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, although Divine power was not manifested in exactly the same form. On Abram believing God about a promised Isaac in whom the seed would be called, God ratified His former promises by covenant.

"In that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates" (Genesis 15:18).

The sacrifice had now been offered and accepted, as proved by **"the smoking furnace and a burning lamb that passed between these pieces."**

We pass over, for the present, the seventeenth chapter of Genesis which relates to the covenant of circumcision as entered into with Abram when 99 years of age, and in connection with which his name was changed to Abraham. Circumcision became the initiatory rite into the privileges and blessings of the national covenant. Abraham is now promised, not only that he shall be the father of **"a great and mighty nation;"** but also that he shall **"be a father of many nations"** (Genesis 17:4).

In a natural seed both these promises have received their primary fulfillment; the former in the nation of Israel; and the latter in the descendants of Ishmael, Abraham's son by Hagar, and in the powerful peoples, the descendants of Abraham by Keturah. These promises will be more exhaustively fulfilled in the conversion of Israel as a nation, and in the blessing of all nations through Israel, for then all who are truly blessed in Christ will be Abraham's seed. **"If ye are Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise"** (Galatians 3:29). **"Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are children of Abraham"** (Galatians 3:7).

The promises given in the twelfth chapter of Genesis, ratified by covenant founded on accepted sacrifice in the fifteenth of Genesis, are now confirmed by solemn oath on Abraham's obedience to God in offering his son Isaac. There are no afterthoughts with God. He needs never to go back to correct or improve anything.

Abraham's faith in God as to the miraculous birth of Isaac typifying the miraculous birth of His beloved Son, was so honoring and pleasing to God, that his faith was counted for righteousness, and he himself regarded as **"the friend of God."**

Another event in the history of Abraham's faith and obedience is made the occasion of the *oath* of God. God swears. God demands the sacrifice of Isaac, and by the father's own hand. God did prove Abraham. He was equal to the occasion. **"Take now thy son, thine only son, whom thou lovest, even Isaac"** (Genesis 22:2).

How this sounds like the only-begotten, the well-beloved Son, even Jesus, whom it pleased the Father to bruise. In Abraham's obedience God secures another type of His beloved Son, setting forth at once the Father's love-gift, and the Son's voluntary sacrifice.

“And the Angel of the Lord called unto Abraham a second time out of heaven, and said, By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son; that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed” (Genesis 22:15-18).

It is most interesting and instructive to ascertain from Scripture why God swears, when His bare word of promise cannot be broken. It is not necessary to examine every instance in which God has sworn to ascertain the meaning of the oath of the LORD. Anything instituted by God for a temporary purpose had no oath attached to it, and could thus be set aside or abolished when its purpose had been fulfilled, but anything confirmed by oath remains unaltered.

For example: The Aaronic priesthood was instituted by God, and under such solemn sanctions, that we are told **“no man taketh the honour unto himself, but when he is called of God, even as was Aaron”** (Hebrews 5:4).

But this Aaronic priesthood could be changed, and was changed, to make way for the priesthood of Christ and the spiritual priesthood of all believers in Christ. A literal priest is **“taken from among men . . . that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins”** (Hebrews 5:1).

As the priesthood of Christ abolished the priesthood of Aaron, it necessarily abolished the law of sacrifices also; for a priest has no place without an altar and a sacrifice. **“For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law”** (Hebrews 7:12).

Why then could the priesthood of Aaron be changed? Because it was instituted *without an oath*.

“For those priests were made without an oath” (Hebrews 7:21). But Christ **“hath an unchangeable priesthood”** (Hebrews 7:24). Why? Because **“The Lord sware and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever”** (Hebrews 7:21).

The priesthood of Aaron was typical and temporary; the priesthood of Christ was antitypical and abiding; so that the Levitical priests were **“made without an oath; but this (Christ) with an oath.”**

So then the oath of God added to promise not only strengthens our faith in the fulfillment of His bare word, but also teaches us that nothing can be altered or fail that is sworn to. God has sworn that the waters of Noah shall no more cover the earth. We may thus be perfectly sure that another universal flood is impossible. God has sworn by His holiness that he will not lie unto David.

“His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me.” “I have sworn unto David my servant; thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations,” (Psalm 89:35, 36, 3, 4), so that anyone who doubts the future occupancy of David’s throne believes that God can not only break a promise but also violate an oath.

It may be asked here, but what is the nature of the blessing secured by the oath of God to the entire world through the seed of Abraham? Nothing less or other than the gospel of Christ. **“The scripture foreseeing that God would justify the heathen by faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed”** (Galatians 3:8).

As this promise reaches to the end of the millennial era, it is plain we shall have the same glorious old gospel in the millennium as now. It is therefore unscriptural to speak of the present dispensation as *the gospel dispensation* in contradistinction from the millennium. It may scripturally be spoken of as an elective dispensation, or, the dispensation of the Church; to be succeeded by the millennial era, in which all nations as such will be blessed through the seed of Abraham with the gospel of Christ.

It may now be well to ascertain the exact meaning and application of the term **“seed of Abraham,”** whose mission it is to bless the world.

The first application of the term **“seed of Abraham”** is made to the Lord Jesus Christ, as the procuring cause of the blessing itself, **“Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ”** (Galatians 3:16). The second application of the term **“seed of Abraham”** is made to all believers in Christ—circumcised or uncircumcised. **“And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise”** (Galatians 3:29).

It may well be asked here, “What constitutes a believer in Christ, uncircumcised in flesh, a son of Abraham?”

By being united to Christ, he is linked to Abraham in a covenant of faith made with him before he was circumcised, that is, when he was as much a Gentile as a Jew, for he was neither the one nor the other. On Abraham believing God about a promised Isaac, as recorded in Genesis 15, several years before he was circumcised, he became the father of all believers.

All believers in Christ are thus by the authority of scripture Abraham's spiritual seed. But this does not imply that believers of Gentile origin are *spiritual Israelites*. One does not *include* the other; one *excludes* the other.

No one but a converted natural Israelite is properly and scripturally a spiritual Israelite. The very fact that I, a believing Gentile, am a child of Abraham by faith, is the very reason why I am not a spiritual Israelite. Israel was a name given by God to only one man—Jacob—whose children were children of Israel, and whose descendants were and are designated Israelites. The term Israelites legitimately applies to all the descendants of Jacob, and to none others.

Are not believing Gentiles spiritual Israelites? No, certainly not. Why not, if they are children of Abraham? Are not the terms “spiritual seed of Abraham” and “spiritual Israelites” one and the same as to their meaning? They are not the same thing in themselves, though they both apply equally to all truly converted natural Israelites, they being spiritual Israelites and spiritual seed of Abraham also.

Why are not believing Gentiles spiritual Israelites? Because Israel was a term applied to Jacob after he was circumcised, and is never applied to any but Jacob's circumcised descendants. Abraham became the father of believers—circumcised and uncircumcised—in a covenant of faith made with him years before he was circumcised; so that blessings flowing out of this covenant might reach all nations, whilst blessings affecting Israelites as such would be confined to the elect nation. This teaching will become perfectly clear by a careful study of Romans 4 and Galatians 3.

The former part of Romans 4 speaks of a righteousness by faith, and of the blessedness of forgiven sin. **“Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness”**—quoted from Genesis 15:6 and, **“Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin”** (Romans 4:3, 8). Then the question comes in verse 9, **“Cometh this blessedness then upon the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also? for we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. How was it then reckoned? *when he was in circumcision*, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision. And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also.”**

Thus in the covenant of faith made with Abraham while uncircumcised, all believers in Christ, though uncircumcised in flesh, are Abraham's spiritual seed.

Now what is Abraham to the unbelieving Jew?

He is simply a father according to natural descent and national covenant, entitling him to a share in earthly blessings in Palestine.

What is Abraham to the believing Jew?

He is also a father according to the covenant of faith. **“And the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised”** (Romans 4:12).

Thus Abraham's spiritual seed are indifferently believing Jews or believing Gentiles; whilst spiritual Israelites are believing Jews only the former interested in a covenant made in uncircumcision; the latter term—Israelite—applied to a circumcised people only. Some say, but what do you make of such passages as, **“Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile”** (John 1:47), **“The Israel of God”** (Galatians 6:16); and **“He is not a Jew who is one outwardly . . . but he is a Jew who is one inwardly,”** &c. (Romans 2:28, 29).

As to the expression, **“Behold an Israelite indeed,”** it must be remembered that Nathaniel, of whom this was said, was both a natural and spiritual Israelite, just as we now say of a professing Christian, who is consistent and real, he is a Christian indeed, or he is a true Christian. Again, **“he is not a Jew who is one outwardly,”** &c.

This passage has substantially the same meaning.

The Jew has always prided himself in his national election as the favored people of God, and thinks that his circumcision, which entitles to the privileges of national election, secures his eternal salvation. No, by no means; he must be an **“Israelite indeed;”** a **“Jew inwardly,”** circumcised in heart as well as in flesh; in plain words, he must be converted, born again.

But does not the term **“Israel of God”** include believing Gentiles as well as believing Jews? No, we think not. Why not?

In the first place the Apostle of the Gentiles, in Galatians 6:16, prays for a blessing on believing Gentiles, and then, besides and beyond these, also **“upon the Israel of God.”** **“And as many as shall walk by this rule, peace be upon them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God”** **“The Israel of God”** here evidently refers to some other people than believing Gentiles.

Again, the expression **“Israel of God,”** may not be meant to describe believing Jews alone, but may, and most probably does, include unbelieving Jews, that is, the whole of the elect nation. A prayer from the Apostle Paul for his own people was in perfect harmony with his known state of heart towards them; for his heart’s desire and prayer to God was for their salvation; and he could even wish himself accursed from Christ for his brethren’s sake, his kinsmen according to the flesh. We understand, then, by **“the Israel of God”** the elect nation, elect to be a channel and an instrument of blessing to the world.

This will greatly simplify the Word of God to the ordinary reader.

If Christ’s, then Abraham’s seed, whether Jew or Gentile, by virtue of the covenant of faith made with Abraham in uncircumcision, that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised. Israel, being a name given to Jacob *after* circumcision, the term Israel or Israelite applies only to the circumcised natural descendants of Jacob, whom God called Israel.

The practical application of this teaching is most important.

Now the natural descendants of Jacob are entitled to all the promises made to Israel, as truly as that they are exposed to all the curses denounced on that name. How readily has the Christian Church for ages past given a literal interpretation to all the curses on Israel, and applied them, and justly so, to the natural Israel; and with equal readiness has she given a spiritual interpretation to all the promises to Israel, and applied them, and most unjustly so, to Gentile believers.

We believe there is not one single instance in the Word of God, Old Testament or New, in which the term Israel can legitimately be applied to any but the natural descendants of Jacob. Take a few passages relating to threatened curses and promised blessings.

“I have given Jacob to the curse, and Israel to reproaches” (Isaiah 43:28).

“He that scattered Israel will gather him” (Jeremiah 31:10). The gathering will surely be as literal as the scattering, and of the same natural and national Israel.

- **“Let Israel hope in the LORD, for with the LORD there is mercy”** (Psalm 130:7).
- **“Let Israel hope in the LORD from henceforth and for ever”** (Psalm 131:3).
- **“O Lord, save thy people, the remnant of Israel”** (Jeremiah 31:7).
- **“O that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion! When the LORD bringeth back the captivity of His people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad”** (Psalm 14:7).
- **“Israel shall be saved in the LORD with an everlasting salvation . . . In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory”** (Isaiah 45:17, 25).

This application of the term Israel, so just, so simple, so natural, has a tendency to awaken in Christian hearts the deepest interest in the salvation of God’s ancient people.

We have now ascertained two distinct applications of the term **“seed of Abraham,”**

- First, Christ;
- Second, all believers in Christ.

We have yet a third application— Abraham’s natural descendants: **“But thou, Israel, art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend”** (Isaiah 41:8).

The promises were made to Abraham, renewed to Isaac, and confirmed to Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel. Israel, we have seen, is a term applied only to the natural descendants of circumcised Jacob, so that to the elect nation of Israel belong the promises, and through the elect nation of Israel will come the world’s blessing.

“But now, thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel: fear not, for I have redeemed thee; I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine . . . The people which I formed for myself, that they might set forth my praise” (Isaiah 43:1, 21).

Our blessed Lord emphasized this doctrine by declaring, **“Salvation is of the Jews.”**

But have not the Jews forfeited the promises by their unbelief? No, certainly not. **“For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged”** (Romans 3:3, 4). The unbelief of some Jews, even the majority, cannot change or thwart the purpose of God.

But it may be objected, the Jews have broken the law given under the awful solemnities of Sinai; has not their transgression of law annulled the promises? Let the Apostle Paul, by the authority of the Holy Spirit, answer again. When was the law given, before or after the promises? **“And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise”** (Galatians 3:17, 18).

Now here we plainly see that promises given four hundred and thirty years before the law have not been annulled to the Jew nor transferred to the Gentile by the breach of that law; especially as the promises were confirmed in a covenant made beforehand by God.

The important question arises, have these promises been confirmed? and in what does Scriptural confirmation consist?

Divine confirmation does not mean ecclesiastical confirmation, but it means the oath of God added to the promises of God, in order to strengthen the faith of His people, and to set forth the unchangeable character of His purpose, as we have already seen.

Have then these promises been sworn to, and thus confirmed? They were sworn to by God on the occasion of Abraham's willingness, in obedience to God, to sacrifice Isaac, as recorded in Genesis 22. **"By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, because thou hast done this thing and hast not withheld thy son, thine only, son: that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice"** (Genesis 22:16-18).

The oath of God to Abraham has confirmed and made unalterably sure the promises of God to Abraham and to his seed.

This is further set forth in the Divine letter to the Hebrews.

"For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself, Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us" (Hebrews 6:13-18).

Here we see the oath of God is final for confirmation, and further illustrated in Galatians 3:

"Brethren, I speak after the manner of men: Though it be but a man's covenant, yet when it hath been confirmed, no one maketh it void, or addeth thereto" (Galatians 3:15); so that we are not at all surprised to find the promises good to Israel still, unaffected by their conduct since the promises were made and sworn to: and lest anyone might suppose that by the Jews' rejection of Christ the promises had been annulled, the Apostle Paul is authorized to state, **"Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers: And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name"** (Romans 15:8, 9).

Notwithstanding the awful and repeated disobedience of the Jews under the old covenant of law, the promises confirmed by oath have travelled safely down to Christ; and as His rejection was in the line of the Divine purpose, the promises were not annulled but confirmed by Christ.

Now they are, if possible, safer than ever; **“For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us”** (II Corinthians 1:20).

These wonderful promises, God’s promises, made to Abraham and to his seed, belong to-day to the natural and national Israel, and not to the Church; promises which secure blessing to Israel, and blessing through Israel to the whole world.

Peter, in Acts 3, addressed the people as **“Ye men of Israel,”** and then told them, **“ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed”** (Acts 3:25), and Paul, when expressing his deep interest in the salvation of his kinsmen according to the flesh, in Romans 9, speaks of them as **“Israelites, to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and *the promises!*”** (Romans 9:4).

The promises are still theirs, and the blessing to the whole Gentile world awaits the fulfillment of these promises to the natural and national Israel.

~ end of chapter 2 ~

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“ISRAEL MY GLORY”

Israel’s Mission, and Missions to Israel

by

John Wilkinson

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CHAPTER THREE

THE REJECTION OF ISRAEL:— ITS CAUSES, CONSEQUENCES, AND DURATION

IN the study of the Jewish question it is most important to distinguish between that which is national and temporal on the one hand, and that which is individual and spiritual on the other.

Failing to observe this distinction numbers of Christians have supposed that the spiritual interests of the individual Jew have been unfavorably affected by the national fall; and that during the period of national rejection there is little hope of even individual conversion. Israel is an *elect* nation, an earthly people, with Palestine as an earthly inheritance, and with corn, wine, fruit and oil as their earthly blessings. **“For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel”**—that is, all descendants of Jacob called Israel are not worthy of the name as applied to Jacob. There was and is a spiritual election amongst the national Israel, called **“a remnant according to the election of grace”** (Romans 11:5).

The interests of the national election are bounded by time, and are **“earthly”** in their nature; the interests of spiritual and individual election affect the soul’s destiny throughout eternity.

The eleventh chapter to the Romans speaks of the Jews as **“fallen”** and as **“cast away,”** and yet as distinctly states that they are not *fallen* and are not *cast away*.

“I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy. Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness?” “For if the casting away of them is the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?” “I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God hath not cast away his people” (Romans 11:11, 12, 15, 1, 2).

Here we have it plainly stated that in some sense the Jews are **“cast off”** and are **“fallen,”** and as plainly stated that they are *not cast off*, and are *not fallen*. These two statements cannot possibly be understood in one and the same sense, or we should have a contradiction from which there would be no escape.

The *fall* and the *casting away* refer to the nation as such; whilst the statement “**God hath not cast away His people**” refers to their individual and spiritual interests, for the proof given is conclusive; Paul says, “**For I also am an Israelite,**” &c. As much as to say, “If I, a bigoted, blaspheming, bloodthirsty persecutor, have been converted, though my nation is cast off for hundreds of years, any other Jew maybe converted, any number of other Jews may be converted, for God hath not cast off His people in relation to their individual, spiritual, eternal interests. It is true, then, the Jewish nation has fallen, but not finally. The Jewish nation is “**cast off,**” but neither totally nor finally. Not totally, for there is now, and always has been, “**a remnant according to the election of grace;**” not finally, for “**all Israel shall be saved**” (Romans 11:26).

The rejection of Jesus by the Jew’s was a national act.

The Sanhedrin, representing the nation, as our British House of Commons represents our British nation, were responsible for that wicked act. National sins call for national judgments; individual sins for individual judgments.

Had it been possible for an individual man to have shot the Lord Jesus, that one man would alone have been responsible for the act, but the rejection was a national act and their rejection was national.

This national rejection was, however, never intended to hinder individual conversion, and never did hinder; and were it not that the *present dispensation* is for the gathering to Christ, forming the Church of Jews and Gentiles, the whole of the Jews as individuals might be converted while in dispersion, that is, while nationally cast off.

Thus, as a nation, they are cast out of Palestine; but, as individual sinners, they are not cut off from the privileges and blessings of the gospel.

This national rejection was predicted even before the tribes of Israel had ever possessed the land.

“**If thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God . . .**” and, “**because thou wouldest not obey the voice of the LORD thy God; it shall come to pass, that as the LORD rejoiced over you to do you good, and to multiply you; so the LORD will rejoice over you to destroy you, and to bring you to nought; and ye shall be plucked from off the land whither thou goest in to possess it. And the LORD shall scatter thee among all peoples, from the one end of the earth even unto the other**” (Deuteronomy 28:15, 62-64).

Our blessed Lord announces the national rejection as near at hand.

“**And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation**” (Luke 19:41-44).

“When ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and *shall be led away captive into all nations*” (Luke 21:20-24).

Thus we have seen the national rejection predicted by Moses and by the Lord Jesus Christ in such minute details as to prove at once the inspiration of the Scriptures, and also the Divine mission of Moses and of Christ.

Now we come to consider the causes of Israel’s national rejection:—

- I. Idolatry;**
- II. Rejection of Christ;**
- III. Forbidding the gospel to the Gentiles.**

I. IDOLATRY

This is so obvious to all readers of the Old Testament Scriptures that nothing more is needed than a reference to a few passages of Holy Scripture.

“Even all the nations shall say, Wherefore hath the LORD done thus unto this land? What meaneth the heat of this great anger? Then men shall say, Because they forsook the covenant of the LORD, the God of their fathers, which he made with them when he brought them forth out of the land of Egypt; and went and served other gods, and worshipped them, gods whom they knew not, and whom he had not given unto them: therefore the anger of the LORD was kindled against this land, to bring upon it all the curse that is written in this book: and the LORD rooted them out of their land in anger, and in wrath, and in great indignation, and cast them into another land, as at this day” (Deuteronomy 29:24-28).

Here, we have correct history written hundreds of years beforehand, which none but God could foresee.

“Ye shall make you no idols, neither shall ye rear up a graven image, or a pillar, neither shall ye place any figured stone in your land, to bow down unto it: for I am the LORD your God . . . I will destroy your high places, and cut down your images, and cast your carcasses upon the carcasses of your idols, and my soul shall abhor you. And I will make your cities waste, and bring your sanctuaries unto desolation, and I will not smell the savour of your sweet odours. And I will bring the land into desolation: and your enemies which dwell therein shall be astonished at it. And I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you: and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste” (Leviticus 26:1, 30-33).

This again is plain history written hundreds of years before the events occurred, and even before Israel entered upon the possession of their inheritance.

Now let us take a graphic passage from the Psalms.

“He cast out the heathen also before them, and divided them an inheritance by line, and made the tribes of Israel to dwell in their tents. Yet they tempted and provoked the most high God, and kept not his testimonies: But turned back, and dealt unfaithfully like their fathers: they were turned aside like a deceitful bow. For they provoked him to anger with their high places, and moved him to jealousy with their graven images. When God heard this, he was wroth, and greatly abhorred Israel . . . And delivered his strength into captivity, and his glory into the enemy's hand” (Psalm 78:55-61).

“Of their silver and their gold have they made them idols, that they may be cut off.” “Israel is swallowed up: now shall they be among the Gentiles as a vessel wherein is no pleasure.” “My God will cast them away, because they did not hearken unto Him: *and they shall be wanderers among the nations*” (Hosea 8:4, 8; 9:17).

But why quote these passages at such length when the doctrine they prove is so obvious to the thoughtful reader of the Old Testament Scriptures? Because so many Christians speak of the rejection of Christ as the sole cause of Israel's national rejection: indeed the intelligent Jew has been told again and again that this is the cause of his rejection.

To this he replies: Were not the whole twelve tribes turned out of Palestine hundreds of years before Jesus was born? And did not the few thousands restored from Babylonish captivity remain in national possession of their inheritance an entire generation after their rejection of Christ? For the nation was not cast out of Palestine till about forty years after the crucifixion. So that the Jew asks naturally enough—How do you know that it was anything more than a coincidence that our nation was rejected some forty years after our rejection of Christ?

It is therefore not wise in the Christian to speak of the rejection of Israel as caused solely by Israel's rejection of Christ.

Idolatry, then, was clearly a cause of national rejection.

It was thus an awful sin against God. Let the Christian reader be loyal to conscience, and ask himself the question: Am I an idolater? And let him not be in haste to say, No, certainly not, until he has satisfied himself that he is not covetous.

In New Testament phraseology God says, **“covetousness, which is idolatry.”** (Colossians 3:5), **“covetous person, who is an idolater”** (Ephesians 5:5).

As idolatry put Israel out of national communion with God, so covetousness will put any individual Christian out of spiritual communion.

II. REJECTION OF CHRIST

This, though not the sole cause, is plainly a cause of national rejection. Two or three passages will be quite sufficient to prove and illustrate this.

“And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes . . . because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation!” (Luke 19:41-44).

Compare this with **“Blessed be the LORD God of Israel; for he hath *visited* and redeemed his people”** (Luke 1:68-78).

It is very instructive to read on to verse 78. Here we have the Redeemer *visiting* his people, and the nation rejected because they knew not the time of their *visitation*.

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord” (Matthew 23:37-39).

III. FORBIDDING THE GOSPEL TO THE GENTILES

It is true the people of Israel were not swept out of Palestine immediately on their rejection of their Messiah, but were permitted to remain some forty years after the crucifixion; nevertheless, as the crucifixion did not take place till some time after the rejection of Christ by his nation, so the destruction of Jerusalem did not take place till many years after the rejection of Christ.

But the rejection of the nation took place even before the crucifixion itself, for that rejection was declared by the Lord Himself before His death, and the forty years which elapsed between the death of Jesus and the destruction of Jerusalem were simply the period during which the execution of the sentence was delayed.

The longsuffering of God gave the Jewish nation a whole generation to reconsider its decision.

The marvellous works of Christ had failed to convince the nation of His Messiahship; and now the marvellous works of the Holy Spirit are manifested in the conversion of thousands upon thousands of individual Jews; but still the authorities representing the nation adhered to their former decision, and not only refused to accept Christ for themselves, but bitterly persecuted their believing brethren, and, to the utmost of their power, forbade the Gospel to the Gentiles.

When Paul at Thessalonica, **“as his custom was,”** went first to the Jews, and preached the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and some believed, and when a great multitude of devout Greeks, and not a few of the chief women, consorted with Paul, and Silas (See Acts 17:1-4)—

“But the Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar . . . And these all do contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, one Jesus” (Acts 17:5-7).

Again, when many Jews and many Greeks, men and women, believed in Christ at Berea, **“the Jews of Thessalonica . . . came thither also, and stirred up the people” (Acts 17:13).**

Paul, while at Jerusalem, had been seen in the city with Trophimus, the Ephesian, whom some **“Jews from Asia” “supposed that Paul had brought into the Temple.”**

When these Jews saw Paul in the Temple, they **“stirred up all the people, and laid hands on him, crying out, Men of Israel, help . . . And all the city was moved, and the people ran together: and they took Paul, and drew him out of the temple: and forthwith the doors were shut” (Acts 21:27-30).**

In the midst of some shouting one thing, some another, among the crowd, Paul was rescued by the chief captain and soldiers from the violence of those who were beating him, and seeking to kill him; and permitted to speak to his excited and enraged brethren in the Hebrew tongue. They gave quiet attention to his address until he told them, in the account of his conversion, that the Lord had said unto him, **“Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles. And they gave him audience unto this word, and then lifted up their voices, and said, Away with such a fellow from the earth: for it is not fit that he should live” (Acts 22:1-22).**

Again: **“Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision: But shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance. For these causes the Jews caught me in the temple, and went about to kill me” (Acts 26:19-21).**

And then, addressing Gentile Christians at Thessalonica, Paul says: **“For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews: Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men: Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins alway: for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost” (I Thessalonians 2:14-16).**

It must have cost the Apostle Paul intense pain to have to write **“wrath to the uttermost”** respecting his brethren he so intensely loved; so that it was infinitely kind of the Holy Spirit to employ Paul to write the Epistle to the Hebrews, and to tell his Jewish brethren that **“He is able to save to the uttermost.”** The Jews had rejected the Father under the old covenant. They rejected the Son under the new. And now they not only resist the Holy Ghost under the dispensation of the Spirit, but they forbid the Gospel to the Gentiles. We incur responsibility enough in rejecting Christ, and refusing His salvation for ourselves, but it is an additional responsibility to seek to hinder others.

We have now considered fully the character and causes of Israel's national rejection, bringing upon the nation "**wrath to the uttermost**," whilst leaving the spiritual interests, of the individual Jew untouched by his national fall, and also leaving in full force the duty of the Church to preach the Gospel, not only "**to every creature**," which includes the Jew, but "**to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile**."

Consequences—What are the consequences of the national rejection of Israel? We must consider those consequences first, to themselves—the Jews; and secondly, to the Gentiles.

First, then, *to the Jews themselves*. Their national rejection has involved the loss of country. As long as they remain in dispersion they remain nationally without a true knowledge of God; and during the same period they cease to be in their corporate or national capacity the religious teachers of the world.

"For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim: afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the LORD their God, and David their king; and shall fear the LORD, and His goodness in the latter days" (Hosea 3:4, 5).

Thus we see that while out of Palestine Israel is without king and without prince; they are also without a true knowledge of God, for they are to seek the Lord their God on their return.

Whilst in dispersion they are a nation without Christ, because without a true knowledge of God. They are also without Mosaism, for they are without a sacrifice. They are also free from idolatry, for they are without teraphim.

No wonder, then, that during their national rejection, and as its consequence, they have ceased to be the religious teachers of the world in their corporate capacity, **"Therefore I say unto you, the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof"** (Matthew 21:43).

Briefly put, these are the consequences to themselves.

Now let us consider, secondly, *the consequences to the Gentiles*.

These may be summed up in the words—partial blessing, as *occasioned* by their national rejection; in contradistinction from the universal blessing their national conversion will instrumentally cause.

"I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy. Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness? . . . For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead" (Romans 11:11, 12, 15)

The argument in these verses is clear and full of force: that if the national “**fall**” and the national “**casting away**” has been overruled by God for great though limited blessing to the Gentiles; how much more may we expect their conversion as a nation to prove the instrumental cause of blessing to the entire world. In other words, if a national calamity has occasioned partial blessing, how much more will national conversion instrumentally cause universal blessing.

What is the extent of the partial blessing to the Gentiles, as occasioned, though not caused, by the national but temporary rejection of Israel?

The full extent of the partial blessing includes the civilizing influences of Christianity amongst many Gentile nations, the influence of Christianity upon literature, upon politics, and upon domestic and social life in many lands for many ages; but the blessing which relates to personal salvation is confined to those individual Gentiles, who, in addition to individual believing Jews, have been saved by the Lord Jesus Christ since the opening of this dispensation at Pentecost.

As the saved individual Jews are called “**a remnant according to the election of grace**,” so the saved individual Gentiles are called a people *taken out* for His name. This is an elective dispensation. It is not the final dispensation. It will not gradually develop into the millennium, but is as distinct from the millennial era as it is from the Mosaic which preceded it.

This is most important to understand, in order to harmonize the statements of Scripture with the facts of this dispensation. Whilst the elect nation of Israel is scattered into all lands, the Holy Spirit by the Gospel is gathering an elect Church from all lands, composed of Jews and Gentiles. The Church of this dispensation was not clearly revealed in the Old Testament Scriptures.

“For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel . . . And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Ephesians 3:1-11).

The same doctrine is taught also in the epistle to the Colossians and to the Romans.

“Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church: Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God; Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:

“Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus” (Colossians 1:24-28).

“Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was *kept secret since the world began, but now is manifested*” (Romans 16:25, 26).

It had been plainly revealed in the Old Testament prophecies that a Divine Messiah was to come, bless the nation of Israel, and through Israel, bless the world. But this Divine Messiah had come; Israel had rejected Him, and God rejected Israel. Now even believing Jews, with the Hebrew Scriptures in their hands, were greatly perplexed, especially when Gentiles were being blessed with salvation through Christ. When Peter preached remission of sins through faith in Christ to Jews and Gentiles at Caesarea, even **“While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost” (Acts 10:44, 45).**

Peter is now called to account for his strange conduct.

“Now the apostles and the brethren that were in Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God. And when Peter was come up to Jerusalem, they that were of the circumcision contended with him, saying, Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them” (Acts 11:1-3).

Peter gives a full explanation of the vision at Joppa, his mission to Caesarea, and its blessed results; and states frankly, **“As I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them (the Gentiles) as on us (the Jews) at the beginning . . . If then God gave unto them the like gift as He did also unto us, when we believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could withstand God? And when they heard these things they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then to the Gentiles also hath God granted repentance unto life” (Acts 11:15-18).**

Here the fact that individual Gentiles are as truly converted as individual Jews is fully confirmed, even though Israel as a nation has been rejected, and will soon be scattered to the four corners of the earth. But the question with thoughtful Jews, who know and believe the Old Testament Scriptures, seems to be this:

How can Gentiles be saved now, during the time of our national rejection, when our Scriptures predict that Messiah shall come, bless Israel, and through blessed Israel bless the Gentile world?

To confirm the fact of Gentile conversion under such circumstances does not lessen but increases the perplexity. A council is held at Jerusalem. Some thought the difficulty would be solved by circumcising the believing Gentiles, and incorporating them with the Jewish Church.

With such men **“Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation.”** Paul and Barnabas and others were appointed to **“go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question.”**

On their way to Jerusalem their minds were evidently full of the question, for they “passed through both Phoenicia and Samaria, declaring the conversion of the Gentiles; and they caused great joy unto all the brethren” (Acts 15:2, 3).

“... **And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter.**” Peter again bears his testimony to the conversion of Gentiles. Then “**all the multitude kept silence; and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul, declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them. And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, men and brethren, hearken unto me: Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for His name**” (Acts 15:6, 12, 13, 14).

Here we are getting precious light on the immediate purpose of God in permitting individual Gentiles to share with individual Jews the blessings of the Gospel of Christ. The Jew’s difficulty is not yet altogether solved.

He naturally feels that the conversion of some Gentiles during Israel’s national rejection does not realize his expectation that when the Messiah comes Israel shall be blessed, and become a blessing to the world. In looking for his Messiah he has been taught to look for universal peace and blessing as the result of His advent.

Has he not been told; “**Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will perform that good thing which I have promised unto the house of Israel and to the house of Judah. In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land. In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this is the name wherewith she shall be called, The LORD our righteousness!**” (Jeremiah 33:14-16)

And has he not been taught to pray— “**God be merciful to us, and bless us, and cause His face to shine upon us; that thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations**”? And also to believe that—“**God shall bless us, and all the ends of the earth shall fear Him**”? (Psalm 67:1, 2, 7)

In the presence of such hopes and expectations, the Jew naturally asks—Will not even the partial blessing of the Gentiles during Israel’s national rejection thwart the purpose of God to bless Israel on the advent of the Messiah, and through Israel to bless the world?

No, says James, Certainly not. The promised blessing is only delayed. A part of the Divine plan is now to be revealed which hitherto had been kept secret, and directly resulting from the rejection of Christ by Israel, and the rejection of Israel by God. The lie is not given to the prophecies by this new revelation. God’s revealed purpose in Israel and through Israel is not changed. For “**to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written. After these things I will return**”—after I have taken out from the Gentiles a people for My name, then, “**I will return**”—come back again. What to do?

“And I will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up”— that is, I will restore and bless the Jewish nation on My return. What then? **“That the *residue* of men might seek after the Lord, and *all the Gentiles*, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things. Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world”** (Acts 15:15-18).

The purpose of the present dispensation, the dispensation of the Spirit, is the salvation of individual sinners of all nations, of the Jew first, as a matter of Divine order; and also of the Gentile. These saved individuals constitute the Church, the Bride of Christ. The saved Jews are called **“a remnant according to the election of grace;”** the saved Gentiles are described as **“a people taken out for His name.”**

The phraseology is most appropriate in each case.

In the case of Israel the whole nation was elected for a Divine purpose, but the national election did not secure eternal salvation for one individual. The saved Jews constituted a spiritual within a national election, and were properly designated **“a remnant according to the election of grace?”**

The saved individual Gentiles were properly spoken of as **“taken out for His name,”** because they were to form the Gentile portion of the Bride of Christ. When a man takes a woman for his wife, he takes her out from all others to bear his name, and as soon as the marriage ceremony is over the bride is introduced to friends by the name of the bridegroom.

The Church, so composed of Jews and Gentiles, is the Bride of Christ, the second Eve for the second Adam—the reward the Father gives to His beloved Son during the period of His rejection by His own nation, and the period of Israel’s national rejection by God. This is not the dispensation for converting the world, but for gathering the Church. So that *Church* and *world* are definite and distinct in the mind of God until the Church has been gathered. All converted sinners, and these only, form the Church, but if the world were converted during this dispensation, the world would become the Church, and the Church the world—they would be co-extensive. What, then, would become of such passages as **“I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil?”** (John 17:15).

The blessing of the world stands over to the millennial era. Indeed, no nation, as such, is to be saved during this dispensation.

The late Dr. Hugh McNeil, in my hearing, put the matter most scripturally, from the platform at Exeter Hall, about the year 1852, when he said, “There are four steps in the conversion of the world: some Jews, some Gentiles; the nation of Israel, and the nations of the Gentiles, Some Jews, called ‘**a remnant according to the election of grace;**’ some Gentiles, called ‘**a people taken out for His name**’—these are both one in Christ, and form the Church. Then the nation of Israel, on the return of the Lord; then the Gentile nations.” Partial blindness has happened to Israel until the full number of the Gentile portion of the Church has been gathered: and then **“All Israel shall be saved: even as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer; He shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob”** (Romans 11:26).

Then God will destroy **“And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the vail that is spread over all nations”** (Isaiah 25:7)

We have now seen most clearly that the consequences of Israel’s national rejection may be summed up, so far as the Gentiles are concerned, in the expression—partial blessing. It has been the occasion of the announcement of reconciliation, through the atoning death of Christ, to sinners—Jews and Gentiles—throughout the world, for the definite purpose of gathering the Church, which is Christ’s body, **“the fulness of Him that filleth all in all”** (Ephesians 1:23).

All the blessing, therefore, that has come to the Gentiles during the eighteen and a half centuries that have elapsed since the rejection of Christ, has been *caused* by the atoning value of Christ’s death, and *occasioned* by the national rejection of Israel.

Duration—How long will Israel’s national rejection last? When will the dispersion cease, and Israel’s sorrows come to an end?

Our blessed Lord, when predicting the rejection of Israel nationally, throws important light upon the period of its duration. He says, **“There shall be great distress upon the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led captive into all the nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled”** (Luke 21:23, 24).

The word *until* implies continuance and cessation —continuance during a period and cessation at its close. Whatever, therefore, may be understood by **“the times of the Gentiles,”** Jerusalem will be trodden down of the Gentiles till those times run out; but, by plain inference, no longer; and as there are only Jews and Gentiles in the world, either the Jews will have Palestine again when **“the times of the Gentiles”** terminate, or that land will be possessed by nobody. This latter alternative is both improbable and unscriptural.

What, then, is meant by **“the times of the Gentiles”** during which Israel’s national rejection continues?

“The times of the Gentiles” are generally understood to represent the period of Gentile power and dominion, commencing with Nebuchadnezzar and terminating with the destruction of Antichrist. By many able expositors these **“times of the Gentiles”** are represented as seven times, or seven years of days, or seven times three hundred and sixty days; that is, a period of 2520 years, on the principle of a day for a year.

It is very difficult, if not impossible, to fix the exact year when the times of the Gentiles commenced, and, this question is outside our purpose to discuss here; but all the best interpreters of prophetic dates are agreed that whatever may have been the exact date for the commencement of these **“times of the Gentiles,”** their termination must be near at hand. When our blessed Lord was asked: just before His ascension, **“Wilt Thou at this time restore the Kingdom to Israel? And He said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power”** (Acts 1:6, 7).

The prophetic Scriptures should be, prayerfully studied, and passing events carefully observed by all Christians, but we question the wisdom of fixing or even suggesting dates at which unfulfilled prophecy will become history.

Thus, without even suggesting who Antichrist will be or when his power will culminate, we know that he will be destroyed, not only before the millennium, but also before Israel as a nation will, again be in peaceful possession of Palestine; and we know further that he will be destroyed by the brightness of the personal second advent of our Blessed Lord. **“And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming”** (II Thessalonians 2:8).

One remarkable passage in Isaiah quoted in the Epistle to the Romans links the culmination of the power of Antichrist with the return of our blessed Lord, the blessing of Israel as a nation, and the blessing of the Gentile world.

Take the New Testament passage first.

“For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins” (Romans 11:25-27).

Now, when we read in the New Testament the words **“as it is written,”** we know perfectly well that the words given as written are found somewhere in the Old Testament Scriptures. We do well under such circumstances to read carefully the quoted text with its immediate context.

In Romans 11:25 we have the revealed mystery of Israel’s partial blindness, ignorance of which in the Gentile Christian breeds conceit. This partial blindness on the Jew will continue **‘until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in’** and then even this partial blindness will pass away.

“The fulness of the Gentiles,” as we have already shown, we take to mean the full number of believing Gentiles forming the Gentile portion of the Church composed of believing Jews and believing Gentiles. The partial blindness will pass away at the close of this dispensation, and on the return of the Lord. Now let us refer to the Old Testament passage.

“So shall they fear the name of the LORD from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him. And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the LORD. As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the LORD; My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed’s seed, saith the LORD, from henceforth and for ever” (Isaiah 59:19-21).

Let us halt here for a moment.

The expression “**fear the name of the LORD from the west**” evidently refers to this present dispensation, during which, though the Gospel came from the east, the western nations have been specially blessed, but “**His glory**” will be “**from the rising of the sun,**” that is, from the east.

Palestine, for suffering and glory, is the Lord’s geographical center.

“**The enemy**” is plainly the Antichrist. His coming in “**like a flood**” represents the climax of his power. The Spirit of the Lord lifting up a standard against Antichrist seems to mean the same as—Only there is one that “**letteth**” (restraineth) now (II Thessalonians 2:7) as stated in II Thessalonians.

Then we have the Redeemer coming to Zion, for the conversion of the Jewish nation on the destruction of Antichrist. We have now the immediate call on the nation of Israel to carry out her grand mission. “**Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee.**”

Then follows a description of the state of the world when the blessing of Israel as a nation takes place.

“**For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising**” (Isaiah 60:1-3).

The *duration* of Israel’s national rejection is till the times of the Gentiles close, and those times close on the destruction of Antichrist, and the second advent of our blessed Lord.

~ end of chapter 3 ~

<http://www.baptistbiblebelievers.com/>

I HAVE LOVED JACOB

by

Joseph Hoffman Cohn, D. D.

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CHAPTER FOUR

LIFE WITH UNCLE LABAN

TWENTY years Jacob slaved for Laban.

Again have his detractors spared no vituperation in their misrepresentations of his experiences and sufferings. For example, here is how one Bible expositor approaches this event.

“Jacob reaches the land of his kindred. He hires to Laban, his uncle. This shrewd and sharp trader meets his match. The man who is always trying to get the better of other people will sometime find his match. Laban was a kind and congenial fellow to work for, but he would fleece you of your last penny. When Jacob met Laban, Greek had met Greek.”

When these vilifiers speak of Jacob’s relations with Laban, their “righteous indignation” reaches its loftiest heights. Utterly ignoring all Biblical facts, they excoriate him as an unprincipled schemer who took an unscrupulous advantage of his so-called trusting and confiding uncle, and cheated him out of a lot of his property.

If they will use as much time in careful and intelligent Bible study as they use in sinful fault finding, they will not let their fertile indignation carry them beyond the boundaries of the realm of truth; for the incontrovertible facts are against them.

“It was little which thou hadst before I came, and it is now increased into a multitude; and the Lord hath blessed thee since my coming.” Thus spoke Jacob to Laban (Genesis 30:30) and every word he said was true. And Laban himself knew it to be the truth; for he made the open confession that he had been prospered only because God had blessed him, *for Jacob’s sake*. Listen to Laban’s testimony, **“I have learned by experience that the Lord hath blessed me *for thy sake*”** (Genesis 30:27). What a startling admission, and what an unanswerable rebuke to those who even now seek to defame Jacob and make him out a blackguard of the most despicable character!

If you think that the life of a shepherd is a sinecure, and all the shepherd has to do is to play his flute while he idles on some grassy knoll under the shade of an old apple tree, you have much to learn. Hughie Call, in her book, *The Golden Fleece*, gives us a poignant insight into the life of a herdsman on the western hills of our own America. With the permission of her publishers, Houghton, Mifflin and Company, we are privileged to quote a few paragraphs:

I never think of the lines of the nursery rhyme, Leave them alone and they'll come home Wagging their tails behind them without smiling. Lost sheep seldom come home, and if they do it's an accident. You go after them, summer or winter. You flounder through snowdrifts, on horseback and on foot. You freeze your hands and feet, but you dare not turn back. Each hour's delay decreases your chance of finding the strays alive. It's a ten-to-one bet that the coyotes, in any case, will prove better hunters.

The word shepherd has always been a synonym of loyalty—which may account for the fact that in no other business is a man of the herder's caliber entrusted with assets representing so great an amount of capital. The herder is solely responsible for the welfare of approximately 1800 head of sheep. An hour's neglect or carelessness on his part could turn the balance from profit to loss on the entire year's operation, and nobody knows it so well as he. There are few sacrifices the herder would not make to keep his flock intact.

We have had herders who went to heartbreaking lengths to stay with their sheep. One, who shot himself accidentally while cleaning a gun, could have reached the ranch in an hour had he deserted his herd to do so. Instead, he drove his flock in and arrived at the ranch four hours later, on the verge of collapse from loss of blood. We rushed him to the nearest hospital, and when he had had a blood transfusion Tom asked him how he managed to travel that far. The herder told him quite cheerfully that he had crawled the last half-mile. And he told the truth. We found his loyalty patterned in a crimson ribbon on the snow along the trail.

If men are rewarded in the Hereafter for what they endure on earth, the herder has something to look forward to. Sheepherding is the hardest, most harrowing work on earth. It is a year-round, 24-hour job.

In spring and summer there is the menace of noxious weeds—death camas, lupine, larkspur and loco weed. They spring up in different places every year, and the herder must be able to recognize them a jump ahead of the sheep and herd them in another direction. Death camas and lupine will poison and kill. Larkspur is fatal to young lambs. The loco weed drives sheep crazy. Once they get a taste of it, they will trace it down from season to season with the zeal and stealth of a drug addict. It has the most astonishing effect. A ewe will leap into the air and begin to race round and round in a circle. Unless she is captured and hobbled she will continue to run in circles until she dies from exhaustion. You can imagine a herder's dilemma should he find himself with a hundred locoed ewes on his hands.

Of all calamities in the sheep country, a pile-up is the most dreaded. It strikes with the speed and fatality of a bolt of lightning. The lead sheep will stumble or come head-long against some obstruction which cannot be got over quickly—a ledge, a steep hollow or a fence. The oncoming herd, unable to stop because of pressure from behind, climb up and up, trampling the first layer of sheep to the ground—the next layer and the next, until there is a writhing mountain of wool.

Sometimes as many as three to five hundred sheep perish from suffocation in a few moments. If the herder is on hand, half the sheep involved may be saved. He must drag them off bodily, so the outcome of a pile-up depends wholly upon his speed and dexterity. Should strayed sheep pile up, less than ten per cent may come out alive.

Seven long years Jacob slaved for Laban, on the promise he would have Rachel to wife. Then what happened? This shrewd and suave paragon of an uncle cheated Jacob and substituted Leah at the wedding; he claimed that the customs of the country did not sanction the marriage of the younger before the elder. What a piece of chicanery! Why did he not tell this to Jacob at the beginning, if he were the honest man that his defenders claim he was? Thus it was that he shrewdly disposed of his two daughters, and in addition, got fourteen years of hard labor from the unsuspecting Jacob who was such a schemer!

“The Ringstraked, The Speckled and The Spotted”

Genesis 30:35

And now Jacob tells Laban, “For fourteen years I have slaved for you, but now I have nothing for myself. You have gotten rich, you are increased with cattle, with land, with goods, and I have nothing. Isn’t it about time that I should begin to provide for my wives, for my own children?” And so a bargain was made; from that time on whatever cattle would be born which were ringstraked, spotted, speckled, would belong to Jacob; whatever would be born not speckled and not spotted would belong to Laban. And Laban enthused to the proposition, **“Behold, I would it might be according to thy word!”**

And that day Laban removed from the flocks under Jacob’s care, all the cattle, all the goats, that were spotted or speckled or ringstraked, and left only stock of solid color. Laban knew the law of husbandry, that a straight colored goat would produce a straight colored kid, and so he took far away, three days’ journey, all the speckled and spotted of the flock, to make doubly sure that there would be no mixture of the breeds. In other words, Laban was going to make sure once more that Jacob should be cheated out of his rightful reward for his labors of these many years; and by this very practice he was actually planning and wishing in his heart that Jacob should have nothing!

But here God invokes a higher law! The Angel of the Lord told Jacob to use the rods, to test his faith and obedience. And so Jacob took sticks from the trees and peeled them like peppermint sticks.

These rods he laid down in the troughs, so when the cattle came to drink they would gaze upon these striped sticks. But Laban could laugh at him, because Laban knew that the science of husbandry had proven that the color of the animals was determined by heredity and not by environment. But God had a law superior to the science of husbandry, and we read a remarkable statement in Genesis 30:39:

“The flocks conceived before the rods, and brought forth cattle ringstraked, speckled and spotted!”

We read again in Genesis 31:11-12:

“The angel of God spake unto me in a dream, saying, “Jacob: . . . Lift up now thine eyes and see, all the rams which leap upon the cattle are ringstraked, speckled and grisled: for I have seen all that Laban doeth unto thee.”

And so instead of Jacob cheating Laban as has been too many times charged by the superficial and the vindictive, it required God's assistance to prevent Laban from sending him home empty-handed! And let us be honest enough to follow the implication to its conclusion: if Jacob was a cheater, then he had God for his partner!

Read Jacob's magnificent defense as he thundered the words at Laban, when Laban in his heathenish greed accused Jacob of treachery. Is there anywhere a finer piece of dramatic literature than you will read in these verses of Genesis 31:38-42:

“This twenty years have I been with thee; thy ewes and thy she goats have not cast their young, and the rams of thy flock have I not eaten. That which was torn of beasts I brought not unto thee; I bare the loss of it; of my hand didst thou require it, whether stolen by day, or stolen by night. Thus I was; in the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night; and my sleep departed from my eyes, Thus have I been twenty years in thy house. I served thee fourteen years for thy two daughters, and six years for thy cattle; and thou hast changed my wages ten times. Except the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the fear of Isaac, had been with, me, surely thou hadst sent me away now empty. God hast seen mine affliction and the labour of my hands, and rebuked thee yesternight.”

After Laban had gouged Jacob many times, the Lord led Jacob to strike a bargain that would recoil upon Laban's own head. And when the bargain was working out just as God had planned it, the Angel of God appeared to Jacob and said to him, **“Lift up thine eyes, and see, all the rams which leap upon the cattle are ringstraked, speckled, and grisled: for I have seen all that Laban doeth unto thee.”**

A Heathen Blasphemer

Now I submit that if Jacob's bargain with Laban was fraudulent, then it was immoral for God to send His angel not only to encourage Jacob but to approve of what he had done! After all, what did God owe Laban? Who was Laban? Only a heathen idol worshipper. Is there not really a moral principle involved here, and indeed in all of Jacob's experiences, which expositors have overlooked? This principle is exemplified many times in the history of God's dealing with Israel. For instance, when the Israelites were delivered out of the hands of the Egyptians, it was with God's direct knowledge and consent, that they **“spoiled the Egyptians!”** Who are we to measure God by our moral yardsticks?

The author was supply preacher one Lord's Day in a small city in the oil fields district of Ohio. He came to the church early and found a Men's Bible Class in session, which he joined. The teacher of the Class turned to me and stated that they had been discussing Jacob, and asked my opinion as to Jacob's character. The particular point was this transaction with Laban. I said to the teacher, “All about us in this state there are farms which are potential oil wells. Some of the larger oil companies have adopted the practice of sending engineers to make tests on some of these farm lands without the knowledge of the farmers. Whenever the engineers report that a farm has oil possibilities, the Company sends an agent to the farmer and offers him a price for his farm, let us say \$10,000.

“The agent does not tell the farmer that underground there may be oil worth a million. The farmer, anxious to get the \$10,000, agrees to the sale. Has the oil company cheated the farmer?”

The men laughed, and I was puzzled to know the reason. The teacher did not answer my question. The bell rang for the class to dismiss, and then I inquired from one of the men as to the reason for the laughter.

He looked at me with surprise, and said, “Don’t you know? Mr. B., our teacher, is one of the paid agents of the Oil Company, whose business it is to go around and buy farms just exactly as you have been telling it!”

Thus I had unwittingly exposed the inconsistency of this teacher. Is it not true even in the present day that every business transaction entered into by Christian businessmen has in it the element of uncertainty? One buys, because he thinks values are going up. Another sells because he thinks the price is high enough. Who is right?

You have heard that the railroad company is going to build a new depot in a different part of town. You hurry over to that part of town and you proceed to buy some property close by to where you think the depot is going to be set up. You do this because you expect that the property will enhance in value just as soon as the public knows that this depot is going to be built. You do not tell the owner of the land that you happen to know that there is going to be a new railroad station built near his property; he knows nothing about it. Are you cheating him? Of course there is also the bare possibility that the information which you received might prove to be false. In such a case your purchase of the land might involve you in heavy loss. If so, would the seller be cheating you? Is it a moral obligation that you must tell all that you know when you are undertaking a business transaction?

But having said all of the above, just so as to doubly prove our argument, we still fall back on what we believe to be clearly evident in the Scripture text itself, and that is that Jacob knew nothing of the laws of husbandry; that instead of his doing any conniving or scheming, it was God Himself Who told Jacob what to do, and it was God Who worked the miracle of causing the cattle to bring forth young that were ringstraked, speckled, and spotted.

~ end of chapter 4 ~

<http://www.baptistbiblebelievers.com/>

“ISRAEL MY GLORY”

Israel’s Mission, and Missions to Israel

by

John Wilkinson

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CHAPTER FIVE

ISRAEL’S POSITION AND MISSION IN THE MILLENNIAL AGE

The Jews having now been partially restored to Palestine in unbelief; Gentile power having culminated in the gathered forces of Antichrist; the Jews crushed by Gentiles; “**the quarrel of My (God’s) covenant**” settled in the land; and “**the time of Jacob’s trouble**” passed; the Gentile power is broken and Antichrist destroyed by the Lord Jesus Christ in person.

“Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south. And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the LORD my God shall come, and all the saints with thee . . . And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one.” (Zechariah 14:1-5, 9).

This remarkable passage can be satisfactorily interpreted only by adopting the plain, natural, and obvious sense; and it must be fulfilled in the future. The gathering of the nations to battle; the city Jerusalem; the natural results of war; the Mount of Olives on the east of Jerusalem; the earthquake compared in its effects with an historic earthquake, are easily understood only in their simple and literal meaning.

Further, if understood literally, it must be prophecy and not yet history.

Some interpreters have treated this passage as history and regard it as fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus in the year 70 A.D. But unfortunately for this interpretation the destruction of Jerusalem *followed* the advent of our Lord by a period of seventy years; and occurred even forty years after His ascension; whereas the destruction of Jerusalem predicted here occurs *before* the advent.

Then others have said, the Mount of Olives divided by an earthquake is highly figurative language, intended to describe the opening up of a way from Jerusalem for the Gospel to go forth to other nations!

But unfortunately for this interpretation the Gospel went to the western nations, and the western world has been specially blessed during this dispensation, so that the figurative division of the Mount of Olives was unnecessary. We are almost ashamed to refer to such modes of interpreting the plain Word of God. But such modes of interpretation become necessary where either the literal restoration of Israel is denied, or the premillennial advent of our Lord, or both.

The feet of the Lord Jesus last touched our earth at Olivet. The interval between His ascension and personal return has elapsed. The Holy Spirit during that interval has gathered the Church composed of believing Jews and believing Gentiles. **“The firstfruits”** having escaped the tribulation; and **“the harvest”** having passed through it; the **“holy ones,”** as representing the whole Church, having met the Lord in the air, accompany Him to the Mount of Olives; the thread is taken up where it was broken nearly two thousand years ago; the national Israel is brought again to the front by deliverance from the power of Antichrist, and national conversion by a sight of Christ Himself.

“And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn . . . In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness” (Zechariah 12:9, 10, and 13:1).

The sight of the Lord Jesus Christ breaks the heart of the national remnant surviving the crushing power of Antichrist. The universal mourning is followed by a national cleansing in the fountain of Messiah’s atoning cleansing blood.

Here we have the fulfillment of Romans 11:26. All Israel saved, on the coming to Zion of the Deliverer, who turns away ungodliness from Jacob. This Divine Deliverer coming for the national salvation of Israel is promised in the latter part of Isaiah 59 with which ch. 60 should be read. **“Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.”**

This is the Jewish nation, not the Christian Church, as the preceding context plainly shows, and which is confirmed by Romans 11:26, 27. Then follows an account of the state of the Gentile world as enveloped in darkness, yea **“gross darkness,”** but the glory of the Lord is seen upon Israel, and the Gentiles come to Israel’s light and kings to the brightness of Israel’s rising. Now the Lord is Israel’s everlasting light, and the days of her mourning ended. The people of Israel are now all righteous, and inherit the land for ever; and their beloved metropolis, Jerusalem, is called, **“The city of the LORD, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel. Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee, I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations”** (Isaiah 60).

Thus the Lord Jesus comes not only “**in like manner**”—literally, bodily, visibly—as he was seen to go, according to Acts 1:11; but he comes also to the *same place*, according to Zechariah 14:4. The Lord Jesus Christ *receives the Kingdom* at the commencement of His millennial reign; and at the close of the millennium He *delivers up the Kingdom to the Father*.

Let us now consider Israel’s position in the millennial age.

I. *Israel’s position in relation to man*; and II. *Israel’s position in relation to God*.

I. Israel’s position—geographical—in relation to man

God has chosen Palestine as the geographical center of the world. Israel is destined in the revealed purpose of God to be a channel and an instrument of blessing to all the nations of the earth; so God has chosen the very best position, geographically, for the realization of His plan.

“When the most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. For the LORD’S portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance” (Deuteronomy 32:8, 9).

Here the geographical position of all the Gentile nations is determined by the Most High in relation to His people Israel. God gives the Gentiles their inheritance. He gives Israel Palestine as his inheritance; and takes Israel as His own inheritance.

The apostle Paul beautifully sets forth and enlarges upon this point in his address to the “**Men of Athens**” who worshipped “**an unknown God**.” The “**God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth . . . hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord**” (Acts 17:24-27).

Here we have the Creator of the universe, the Ruler of heaven and earth, the Creator of man, making of that one man “**all nations of men**” to occupy the earth—determining the times or seasons at which in the history of the race these nations shall come into existence, fulfil their mission, and disappear: and describing “**the bounds of their habitation**”—*their geographical boundaries*. All this arrangement is made with the practical object “**that they should seek the Lord**”; that is, to facilitate the spread of the knowledge of God throughout the world.

James, by the Holy Spirit, asks, “**whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?**”

What is true of the individual is true also of nations. Nations covet a portion of their neighbor’s land. If they have right they take it. If they have might, though no right, they still take it, and designate this a readjustment of boundaries, or describing scientific boundaries.

This, of course, generally, if not always, means the taking a large slice from your neighbor, but scarcely ever means the giving of a slice to your neighbor. Hence come national wars.

Now when the Lord returns, as the Prince of Peace, He will hush a warring world to peace, will describe geographical boundaries, put Israel in his own land as God's geographical center, and locate all other nations in relation to Israel, in order to facilitate the blessing of the world.

“Thus saith the LORD God: This is Jerusalem: I have set her in the midst of the nations, and countries are round about her” (Ezekiel 5:5).

This is restored Israel's geographical position in relation to man, and the purpose of God in that position.

II. Israel's Position in relation to God

This may be expressed as, God in the midst of Israel. Amongst the remarkable visions vouchsafed to the prophet Ezekiel, we have one representing the glory departing from Jerusalem, and another representing the glory returning to the same place.

“Then did the cherubims lift up their wings, and the wheels beside them; and the glory of the God of Israel was over them above. And the glory of the LORD went up from the midst of the city, and stood upon the mountain which is on the east side of the city” (Ezekiel 11:22, 23).

Here we have the glory departing by the Mount of Olives, the only mountain **“on the east side of the city.”** Now, on the return of our Blessed Lord to open His millennial reign, the glory returns to the same place.

“Afterward he brought me to the gate, even the gate that looketh toward the east: And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east: and his voice was like a noise of many waters: and the earth shined with his glory. And it was according to the appearance of the vision which I saw, even according to the vision that I saw when I came to destroy the city: and the visions were like the vision that I saw by the river Chebar; and I fell upon my face. And the glory of the LORD came into the house by the way of the gate whose prospect is toward the east. So the spirit took me up, and brought me into the inner court; and, behold, the glory of the LORD filled the house. And I heard him speaking unto me out of the house; and the man stood by me. And he said unto me, Son of man, the place of my throne, and the place of the soles of my feet, where *I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever*” (Ezekiel 43:1-7).

Here the glory returns by **“the way of the east”** to the house or temple of the Lord at Jerusalem, and the glory fills the house.

This glory is the glorious Lord Himself in person, speaking from the house, and declaring that house to be the place of His throne, and the place of the soles of His feet, indeed, His dwelling-place in the midst of the children of Israel for ever.

When this vision becomes actual history, and the Lord has returned to His city and temple, He gives His people Israel a new experience, most appropriately expressed in the language of Isaiah 12:

“And in that day thou shalt say, O LORD, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me. Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the LORD JEHOVAH is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation. Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation. And in that day shall ye say, Praise the LORD, call upon his name, declare his doings among the people, make mention that his name is exalted. Sing unto the LORD; for he hath done excellent things: this is known in all the earth. Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion: for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee” (Isaiah 12:1-6)

Israel’s singing to the Lord because He hath done excellent things, and then declaring His doings among the peoples, and making known these excellent things **“in all the earth,”** implies the rapid transmission of good news throughout the whole world. May not the telegraph wires, which will then belt the globe, be used in telling all nations that the Lord has returned to Jerusalem to reign?

How beautifully this blessedness of Israel is confirmed by the prophet Joel.

“And ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the LORD your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you: and my people shall never be ashamed. And ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the LORD your God, and none else: and my people shall never be ashamed” (Joel 2:26-27).

The Lord in the midst of Israel, and Israel never more ashamed, gives evidence of blessing for national Israel in the future to an extent never experienced in the past.

The prophet Zephaniah bears testimony to the same blessing for national Israel, and under the same circumstances.

“Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem. The LORD hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out thine enemy: the king of Israel, even the LORD, is in the midst of thee: thou shalt not see evil any more. In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear thou not: and to Zion, Let not thine hands be slack. The LORD thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing” (Zephaniah 3:14-17).

Here Israel at home in Jerusalem sings and shouts for joy, and with good reason, for judgments are **“taken away,”** **“Jacob’s trouble”** passed; the enemy **“cast out”**—whether this refers to Antichrist or Satan, the one is destroyed, and the other shut up for a thousand years: the Lord in Israel’s midst, mighty to save, and Himself rejoicing over His restored and saved people.

By the prophet Zechariah this doctrine is confirmed.

“For I, saith the LORD, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her . . . Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the LORD” (Zechariah 2:5, 10).

“Thus saith the LORD: I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem shall be called the city of truth, and the mountain of the LORD of hosts, the holy mountain . . . Thus saith the LORD of hosts: Behold, I will save my people from the east country, and from the west country; and I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God, in truth and in righteousness” (Zechariah 8:3, 7, 8).

Here again we have Israel restored from the extremities of the earth—from the east country and from the west country; Jerusalem called **“the city of truth;”** the people singing and rejoicing because they are in the midst of Jerusalem, and are to dwell there; and because the LORD has returned to Zion, and will Himself dwell in the midst of Jerusalem, and will be a wall of fire round about His restored and saved people, and will Himself be their glory.

“In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory” (Isaiah 45:25).

Thus God has placed Israel in the center of the world, and has taken up His own dwelling place in the midst of Israel, to superintend in Person the blessing of the world through Israel. Palestine in the midst of the nations; Jerusalem, the world’s metropolis, in the midst of the nations with the countries round about her; Israel in the midst of Jerusalem; Christ in the midst of Israel; God in the midst of Christ, in whom dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily; all the resources of Deity available to the Lord Jesus Christ—we wonder not that Israel should have a grand and successful mission in filling the earth with the knowledge of God, and bringing in millennial day.

Let us now consider—

Israel’s mission in the millennial age. The teaching of Holy Scripture is as definite and full on this subject as we found it to be on the subject of Israel’s position.

Israel restored and blessed becomes, according to the revealed purpose of God, a blessing to all nations. God’s purpose to bless the world through the seed of Abraham was clearly revealed to him when first called to leave his country. **“I will bless thee;” “and be thou a blessing;” “and I will bless them that bless thee,” “and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed”** (Genesis 12:2, 3).

This passage needs no human comment

“Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favour her, yea, the set time, is come. For thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof. So the heathen shall fear the name of the LORD, and all the kings of the earth thy glory” (Psalm 102:13-16).

The servants of the Lord are taking an unusual interest at this day in Zion's stones and dust, as indicating the nearness of Israel's restoration and the Lord's appearance in glory, when **"the heathen shall fear the name of the LORD, and all the kings of the earth thy glory."**

"He shall cause them that come of Jacob to take root: Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit" (Isaiah 27:6).

The sons of Jacob are now a scattered people, but when restored they shall take root in the land, and bless the world with the fruits of righteousness.

"Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem, for the LORD hath comforted His people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem. The LORD hath made bare His holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God" (Isaiah 52:9, 10).

Here we have the salvation of Israel as a nation followed by the blessing of all the nations of the earth.

"Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her: That ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations; that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory. For thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream" (Isaiah 66:10-12).

It is important here to observe the order of blessing—peace is first extended to Jerusalem like a river; then we have the glory of the nations, or Gentiles, like an overflowing stream.

"In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth: for that the LORD of hosts hath blessed them, saying, Blessed be Egypt My people, and Assyria the work of My hands, and Israel Mine inheritance" (Isaiah 19:24, 25).

Here we have Israel not only in intimate association with Egypt and Assyria, but at home in the midst of the earth, and a blessing in the midst of the earth.

"Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the LORD bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound" (Isaiah 30:26).

This is a most remarkable passage. Whatever the phraseology may mean, it evidently implies blessing, for light is an emblem of blessing; and as seven is the number of perfection or completeness, it implies complete or millennial blessing.

- **"The light of the moon,"** most probably represents the Mosaic dispensation;
- **"The light of the sun,"** the dispensation of the Church;
- **"The light of seven days,"** the glorious millennial day. This blessedness, at all events, will be

the direct result of Israel's national restoration and salvation— **“in the day that the LORD bindeth up the breach (hurt) of His people.”**

The testimony of the prophet Zechariah to the nation of restored and saved Israel is equally clear and glorious. When the promised restoration has taken place, and Israel is dwelling in the midst of Jerusalem, and God in the midst of Israel; then, **“It shall come to pass, that as ye were a curse among the heathen, O house of Judah, and house of Israel; so will I save you, and ye shall be a blessing: fear not, but let your hands be strong . . . Thus saith the LORD of hosts; It shall yet come to pass, that there shall come people, and the inhabitants of many cities: And the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, Let us go speedily to pray before the LORD, and to seek the LORD of hosts: I will go also. Yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the LORD. Thus saith the LORD of hosts; In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you”** (Zechariah 8:13, 20-23).

Here we have **“the house of Judah,”** and **“the house of Israel”**—the whole twelve tribes once a curse among the nations, now saved, and a blessing to them. We have also Jerusalem the center of blessing, and the Jew an instrument of blessing to the entire world.

“And many nations shall be joined to the LORD in that day, and shall be my people: and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto thee. And the LORD shall inherit Judah his portion in the holy land, and shall choose Jerusalem again” (Zechariah 2:11, 12).

Here we have **“many nations”** blessed through Israel, and standing in the same relation to God as His beloved and elect nation— **“they shall be *My people*.”**

“And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem” (Isaiah 2:2, 3).

Here we have Jerusalem as the center of blessing for all nations. The nations flowing to Jerusalem to learn the ways of God, and a knowledge of the will of God flowing out from Jerusalem to all the nations. This must not be spiritualized or allegorized and applied to the Church, but must be received as literal and future; for the teaching here is associated with the cessation of war, and the house of Jacob invited to walk in the light of the Lord. It is not necessary to quote further passages in proof of Israel's mission being a mission of blessing to all nations. The sixty-seventh Psalm, however, is so very appropriate that we feel we must ask the reader's attention to it for a moment. The Psalm opens with prayer and closes in faith, and the middle of the Psalm teaches the same truth.

A godly Jew prays by Divine inspiration— **“God be merciful to us, and bless us, and cause his face to shine upon us”** Surely the us means the writer and the people to whom the writer belongs. **“That Thy way may be known upon earth, Thy saving health among all nations . . . God shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall fear Him.”**

Surely this Psalm plainly teaches the connection between the blessing of Israel and the blessing of the world. It is willingly conceded that the Church of Christ may legitimately use all scripture as teaching spiritual lessons for all time; but the mischief is, that the Jew is so frequently lost sight of altogether, and the purpose of God in Israel entirely missed.

Surely, then, if the Holy Scriptures, taken in their plain and obvious sense, teach any doctrine definitely, they teach the restoration and salvation of Israel; that Israel will assuredly be blessed beyond all former experience; and placed in the midst of the nations and countries surrounding her, and with Christ in the midst of her. will become a blessing in the midst of the earth, so that in Abraham’s seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. Israel now, instead of being a byword and a reproach among the nations, shall be the most honored.

“Behold, at that time I will undo all that afflict thee: and I will save her that halteth, and gather her that was driven out; and I will get them praise and fame in every land where they have been put to shame. At that time will I bring you again, even in the time that I gather you: for I will make you *a name and a praise among all people of the earth*, when I turn back your captivity before your eyes, saith the LORD” (Zephaniah 3:19, 20).

“Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the LORD” (Deuteronomy 33:29).

“Happy is that people, that is in such a case: yea, happy is that people, whose God is the LORD” (Psalm 144:15).

And now in the presence of such marvellous blessing brought to Israel and to the whole world in fulfillment of God’s purpose in electing and preserving Israel, a new song is called for, to be sung to the Lord for His faithfulness, righteousness, and salvation.

“O sing unto the LORD a new song; for he hath done marvellous things: his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory. The LORD hath made known his salvation: his righteousness hath he openly shewed in the sight of the heathen. He hath remembered his mercy and his truth toward the house of Israel: *all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God*” (Psalm 98:1-3).

We have thus gathered from Scripture Israel’s position and mission in the millennial age.

~ end of chapter 5 ~

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“ISRAEL MY GLORY”

Israel’s Mission, and Missions to Israel

by

John Wilkinson

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CHAPTER SIX

DAVID’S THRONE OCCUPIED BY DAVID’S SON AND LORD

The security of David’s throne is guaranteed by the oath of the Lord; nothing can make it more sure. It is almost incredible that any interpreter of Holy Scripture could expect to be listened to who would dare to tell his hearers or readers that the occupancy of David’s throne by the Messiah means nothing more than the reign of Christ in a believer’s heart. The plain, simple, literal sense, whatever it may involve, is the only sense that will satisfy the ingenuous mind. David’s throne consisted in a sceptre swayed over Israel in Jerusalem; and in no sense whatever has David ever had his throne in a believer’s heart. Let us examine the Scriptures which bear on this subject.

Nathan was instructed by the Lord to say to David, **“Also the LORD telleth thee that he will make thee an house. And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. And *thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever*”** (II Samuel 7:11-16).

Here David’s seed is guaranteed *the throne of the kingdom forever*. This is unconditional. It does not depend on the good conduct of his seed. For the sin of David’s seed is anticipated.

“If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men . . . But my mercy shall not depart away from him . . . *And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.*”

Against all contingencies David’s house, David’s kingdom, and David’s throne are secure for ever. For confirmation of this let us look at Psalm 189.

“I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, Thy seed will I establish *for ever*, and build up *thy throne to all generations*. Selah . . .

“Also I will make him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth. My mercy will I keep for him for *evermore*, and my covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven. If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; If they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; Then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me. It shall be established for ever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven. Selah” (Psalm 89:3, 4, 27-37).

Here again, against all contingencies, David’s seed and David’s throne are guaranteed, and are as secure as are the sun and moon. The perpetuity of David’s throne is based upon the oath of the Lord, and that oath rests upon His holiness.

In our first chapter we showed from Scripture the guaranteed preservation of Israel as a nation to the end of time. God declares in Jeremiah 31, that as long as the sun and moon remain Israel shall not cease to exist as a nation before Him forever. Here we have David’s throne as permanently secured as the sun and the moon, and as the faithful witness in the sky—the rainbow. The rainbow is indeed ***“the faithful witness in the sky.”***

I am writing this in Chillingham, Northumberland, during August, 1888, a month characterized by floods of rain, but the rainbow seen by us just before a brilliant sunset on two separate occasions was perhaps as large and glorious as any seen since the days of Noah, when God made it the sign of His covenant with the earth. **“The faithful witness in the sky”** testifies to the oath of the Lord against another universal flood, and this **“faithful witness”** also testifies on the solemn oath of the Lord to the perpetuity of David’s throne. Isaiah, in predicting the advent of the Messiah and His wonderful titles, announces His reign upon the throne of David, and the perpetuity of His dominion.

“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice *from henceforth even for ever*. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this” (Isaiah 9:6-7).

“And in mercy shall the throne be established: and he shall sit upon it in truth in the tabernacle of David, judging, and seeking judgment, and hasting righteousness” (Isaiah 16:5).

“Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS” (Jeremiah 23:5, 6).

Now these words, given as they were by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit of God, must, of necessity, be the very best that could possibly be chosen to describe the events which God intended should actually take place.

If the throne of David is to be as literal as was the cross of Calvary; if the advent of the reigning One is to be as literal as was the advent of the suffering One; and if the king to reign on David's throne be as literal as was the servant ministering in washing disciples' feet; then the language could not have been more suitable in which to predict such events. But if no such literal events were ever intended, then the language seems most inappropriate, confusing, and misleading, and an ingenious mind may make it mean anything. When David's throne has become occupied by David's Son and David's Lord, **"At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the LORD; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the LORD, to Jerusalem: neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil heart"** (Jeremiah 3:17).

"And the name of the city from that day shall be, the LORD is there" (Ezekiel 48:35).

The simplicity, clearness, and strength of the language used to describe the perpetuity of David's throne, and the kingly rule of David's Son and Lord, *oblige us to regard the plain and obvious sense as the only true sense*. The throne of David means the throne of David; and the Lord God will do as Gabriel was instructed to announce, **"Give unto Him (Christ) the throne of His father David."**

But the Jew can raise an objection much more formidable than the spiritualizing theory of the Christian. He can object that as Jesus was not the natural son of Joseph, he had *no lineal right to the throne of David* in any sense whatever. The genealogy of Jesus begins with Abraham, as recorded in Matthew's Gospel, and is continued through David and Solomon right down to Joseph, the husband of Mary. But as Joseph was not the father of Jesus, even according to the New Testament, how could Jesus be of the seed of David? Granting that Joseph was a lineal descendant of David, and, as such, had a right to David's throne, Joseph was no more the father of Jesus than was any ordinary Jew, so that the genealogy of Matthew fails to convince a Jew that Jesus was a son of David. The Messiah must be David's natural seed to be eligible for David's throne. So much must be conceded to the Jew.

"The LORD hath sworn in truth unto David . . . Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne" (Psalm 132:11, 12), and no one can say that Jesus was the fruit of David's body through Joseph. It may be further conceded to the Jew, that if Jesus had been the natural son of Joseph, and thus the son of David, He would have possessed on that ground no right to the throne of David, for Jeconiah is in the genealogy, and his seed has been for ever excluded from the throne of David.

"Thus saith the LORD, write ye this man childless, a man that shall not prosper in his days; for no man of his seed shall prosper sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah" (Jeremiah 22:30).

As far as the genealogy in Matthew is concerned, there are two counts against the right of Jesus to sit on David's throne—*He was not the fruit of David's body* through Joseph; and, besides, as a descendant of Jeconiah he could not occupy the throne of David. We have thus stated the difficulty of the Jew honestly and frankly.

Now for the solution.

We Christians must willingly admit, for it is simple truth, that Jesus was not the seed of David through Joseph, and also that Jeconiah barred the way to David's throne; nevertheless it is perfectly clear that Jesus was a real and natural descendant of David, and has a valid claim to David's throne; and further, that He is the only Person alive now as known to be of David's seed, and as possessing a right to David's throne.

In meeting this difficulty the Christian and the Jew must agree in this one point that the Messiah must meet the claims of prophetic Scripture.

In the first place the Messiah was to be the seed of the woman. Now whenever natural progeny is referred to, the word "**seed**" is always, with this one exception, applied to the male of man or beast, plainly intimating the miraculous birth of a Deliverer, who was to be a Saviour for the race, as well as the Messiah of the Jews. We have therefore another genealogy of Jesus, given by Luke, that goes beyond Abraham, up to Adam, and to God.

After the call of Abraham it was made clear that the blessing of all nations was to come through his seed, not in the line of Ishmael, but that of Isaac.

Isaac was a child of miracle, and thus typified the miraculous birth of the Messiah, which Isaiah distinctly predicted; for He was to be the offspring of a pure Jewish virgin. "**Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son.**" Now it is very clear that if the Messiah was to be miraculously born of a virgin, He could not possibly have a human father; and it is equally clear that the virgin must not only be a Jewess, but also in the direct line of David; that is, she must be of the natural seed of David. Jesus could not have been Joseph's son without falsifying prophecy, even though being Joseph's child He would also have been David's seed.

The Scripture must be fulfilled at all cost, so the Messiah must be born of a Jewish virgin without the intervention of a human father.

Now, what follows? Why, that two genealogies are absolutely necessary:

- One to show the literal fulfillment of prophecy in the miraculous birth of the Messiah from a Jewish virgin, and also as coming from the loins of David;
- The other as setting forth the line to the throne of David, and how to reach it.

Messiah was to be "**Abraham's seed**," of Judah's tribe, and from David's house; but also the seed of the woman and the Jewish virgin's child.

Luke gives the genealogy of the Virgin Mary, the mother of Jesus.

She was the daughter of Heli, who became the father-in-law of Joseph, Joseph's natural father being Jacob. Now we shall not only get all difficulty solved, but we shall see how wonderfully God has fenced round the interests of prophecy and the right to David's throne.

Nathan was a son of David as well as Solomon, and Nathan is at the head of Mary's genealogy as a descendant of David, as Solomon is at the head of Joseph's. Joseph and Mary were both descendants of David. Joseph was in both the natural and regal line, and Mary in the natural line only.

It may be asked, however, How can Luke's genealogy be shown to be Mary's, since Mary's name is not mentioned? We have two genealogies—two only: one is certainly that of Joseph through Solomon; the other as certainly belongs to someone else through Nathan; just as the Prince of Wales is at the head of one line, and the Duke of Edinburgh at the head of another, though both the natural offspring of Queen Victoria.

So, then, as Joseph could not have been the father of Jesus without falsifying prophecy, we needed another genealogy, and as *only one other* person was vitally concerned in the matter, inference is quite as good as a name.

A little boy said one morning to his schoolfellow, "We have another child in our house this morning." The schoolfellow asked, "A boy or a girl?" The little fellow said, "Guess." "A boy." "No, guess again." There was no need, he could infer.

Now let us see what evidence we have of Mary's descent from King David.

Turn to the first chapter of Luke's Gospel, and read verses 26 to 35. **"And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: *and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David*: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."**

Let this portion of Scripture be thoughtfully considered, and it will yield most precious truth.

- It gives us the Jewish virgin of prophecy as the destined mother of the Messiah.
- It gives us her name.
- It gives us the miraculous conception,

- It gives the Divinity of the child—“**called the Son of God**”—

And all this on the testimony of a heaven-sent messenger.

Now the Angel Gabriel, who was sent of God, would certainly know that the child to be born of the virgin Mary would have no human father, but would be miraculously produced by the power of the Holy Spirit, fulfilling exactly the words of the second Psalm, “**Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.**”

The Angel said also to the virgin, “**The Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David.**” The Virgin Mary must therefore have been in David’s line. Mark well, the Angel does not say, “The Lord God will give Him the throne of David,” but, “**the throne of His father David.**”

It is only fair in the interest of truth to admit a further difficulty, the solution of which brings glory to God, before whom all difficulties vanish.

Granted that Jesus met the demands of Scripture, as to the miraculous birth of the Messiah from a Jewish virgin, and that the virgin mother was from David’s loins through Nathan, still we must remember that the right to David’s throne was in the line of Solomon, and not in the line of Nathan; just as the British throne is in the line of the Prince of Wales, and not in that of the Duke of Edinburgh.

How then could Jesus, of David’s seed through Nathan, be entitled to David’s throne in the line of Solomon? This is also very simple. Put two or three things together.

Joseph had a right to David’s throne as being in the royal line from Solomon, but even he could not occupy the throne of David, which was barred against him as a descendant of Jeconiah. Besides, Jesus was not, and could not be, Joseph’s son. The Messiah must be the child of a virgin, and of David’s seed. Jesus was the son of a virgin of David’s seed, but not in the royal line of Solomon.

Now, how is the difficulty to be solved?

Simply, and solely as far as we can see, by a marriage between Joseph and the virgin mother of the Messiah. Thus Jesus has *a right* to the throne through Joseph and is eligible to sit on that throne as David’s seed through the Virgin Mary.

By that marriage Jesus, so to speak, walks *round* the two barriers in the genealogy of Matthew, and walks over the one barrier in the genealogy of Luke. The two genealogies were necessary. It was necessary that both Joseph and Mary should be of David’s seed. The marriage between Joseph and Mary was also necessary. Thus we see that the interests of prophecy and the right to David’s throne have been most carefully protected by the Divine hand. Nothing can be more clear or certain than the right of Jesus to David’s throne, nothing clearer or more sure than that Jesus will occupy David’s throne; and it is equally certain that Jesus has never yet occupied David’s throne.

God has sworn unto David His servant, **“Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations;”** and of the Divine child of the Virgin Mary, Gabriel is instructed to say, **“The Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David.”**

In a *risen Jesus* are guaranteed **“the holy and sure blessings of David.”**

Jesus was born King of the Jews, died King of the Jews, and will return by-and-by as the acknowledged King of the Jews, to **“reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before His ancients gloriously”** (Isaiah 24:23).

~ end of chapter 6 ~

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“ISRAEL MY GLORY”

Israel’s Mission, and Missions to Israel

by

John Wilkinson

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CHAPTER SEVEN

THE TEN TRIBES OF ISRAEL: WHERE ARE THEY NOT? AND WHERE ARE THEY?

Some years ago I was led to write a pamphlet, controversial in character, entitled “*Englishmen not Israelites*,” which passed rapidly through two or three editions, and is now out of print. This has been superseded by another— “*The Ten Tribes: Where are they not? And where are they?*” The substance of the latter is given in this chapter. So much in recent times has been said and written on “the ten tribes” question, that no apology is necessary for giving, in a work on God’s revealed purpose in Israel, an entire chapter to this topic.

Our present purpose is not at all controversial, but simply to set forth the plain teachings of the Word of God, praying the Holy Spirit to use His own sword and His own hammer to cut away and to crush every whim and croquet, however plausible and palatable, which is unscriptural, and consequently mischievous.

We write for our fellow-Christians, whom we would earnestly urge to suspend their judgment till they have thoroughly examined the Word of God, and to be concerned only for truth at all cost; for even unpalatable truth, if less welcome, is more useful than palatable error. It is surely better to know that we have only a penny in the pocket, than, having but a penny, to think it is a pound; for sooner or later we shall be undeceived and disappointed.

First, then, let us notice, “*The ten tribes: where are they not?*”

They are not the Anglo-Saxons for the following Scriptural reasons:

1. **הָעַם לְבַדְּד יֵשְׁכֻן וּבְגוֹיִם לֹא יִתְחַשְׁבּ:** “**Lo, the people alone shall dwell, and among the nations shall not reckon itself**” (Numbers 23:9).

We give the Hebrew with in order that it may be the more clearly seen that we wish to make sure our ground.

Now these words were spoken of the whole twelve tribes in the wilderness, and are true to-day of the Jewish people. But are they true of the Anglo-Saxons? Do the Anglo-Saxons dwell alone? Some say yes; and refer as proof to our insular position.

But in this sense the mark would not be distinctive, for the Irish, or the Maltese, or any other islanders misfit be meant. What about the second clause in the passage? “**shall not be reckoned among the nations.**” Does the English nation not reckon herself among the nations? Witness the various treaties—commercial and political—made and signed by the powers of Europe. This passage as closely fits the Jew as it misfits the Anglo-Saxon, and we may as well attempt to fit an ordinary dress coat to the back of an elephant as try to cover the Anglo-Saxons with this passage.

2. Our second point is founded upon Hosea 3:4, 5.

אחר ישובו בני ישראל כי ימים רבים ישבו בני ישראל אין מלך ואין שר ואין זבח ואין מצבה ואין אפוד ותרפים:
הימים: ובקשו את־יהוה אלהיהם ואת דוד מלכם ופחדו אל־יהוה ואל־שובו באחרית

“For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince . . . Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the LORD their God, and David their king; and shall fear the LORD and his goodness in the latter days.”

Hosea was a prophet specially to the ten-tribed kingdom of Israel, and associates the term “**Children of Israel**” in this passage and in chapter 4:1, with *Ephraim* in 4:17.

We insist upon this the more because our opponents have endeavored to show that *Israel* in this passage must be read as *Judah*, but without the slightest manuscript authority for the change. If the Word of God is to be treated after this fashion, and thus made to mean anything to anybody, it will soon mean nothing to anybody.

What true Christians dare take the responsibility of reading their notions into Scripture by such a process? Is not this course as dangerous as adding to or taking from the Word of God? Please carefully notice the most striking features of this passage: “**Children of Israel;**” Many days without a king or prince; and without a true knowledge of their Messiah-ben-David. Now, are the Anglo-Saxons without civil rulers? Indeed, “**many days**” are rather likely to elapse before the Anglo-Saxons are short of princes.

Again, are the Anglo-Saxons without a true knowledge of God? But Israel is not only to remain in dispersion without civil rulers, but also without a true knowledge of God; and they are to seek the Lord their God on their return. This passage exactly suits the Jewish people; “**who are Israelites;**” but it does not in any way describe either the political or religious condition of the Anglo-Saxons.

Kimchi, the able Jewish commentator of the middle ages, remarks on this passage, “And these are the days of our present captivity, for we have neither king nor prince of Israel, but are under the rule of the nations, even under the rule of their kings and their princes.”

The words “**and David their king**” are referred by the Targum and by the Rabbins to “*Messiah, the Son of David.*”

3. Our third point is founded upon Deuteronomy 4:26, 27; 28:62-66; Jeremiah 30:3, 4, 19; and Zechariah 8:13.

In the first two passages given from Deuteronomy, please to observe that the *whole twelve tribes* were addressed in the wilderness, before they had even entered the Promised Land; consequently, hundreds of years before the tribes were divided into two kingdoms. The threatenings of Deuteronomy were denounced in 1451 B.C., and the twelve tribes were broken into two kingdoms about 975 B.C. We ask special attention to these dates, because our opponents, finding these threatenings do not fit the Anglo-Saxons, have placed them to Judah's account exclusively, when Judah as a separate kingdom did not exist till several hundreds of years after.

With what chastisement were the twelve tribes threatened? Amongst other fearful chastisements, they were to be driven out of their country, scattered among the nations, and become *few in number*. Now, please to notice the passages in Jeremiah 30, written about the time of the Babylonish captivity. The third and fourth verses tell us plainly that the words spoken are “**the words that the LORD spake concerning Israel and concerning Judah**”— the whole twelve tribes.

Now look at the 19th verse, “**I will multiply them, and they shall *not be few*.**” Now look at the fourth passage in Zechariah 8:13. “**It shall come to pass as ye have been a curse among the heathen, O house of *Judah*, and house of *Israel*, so will I save you, and ye shall be a blessing.**”

This eighth chapter of Zechariah evidently reaches down to millennial times, when the four fasts, referred to in the 19th verse (and which are still fasts), shall be converted into feast days;

- The entire nation at home and converted—verse 8;
- God in Christ in the midst of them, in verse 3;
- The Jews a nation of missionaries, according to verse 23.

What inferences do we draw from these plain passages, quoted from Deuteronomy, Jeremiah, and Zechariah? The following:

That the twelve tribes, being out of Palestine for national sins, are under national chastisement and curse—mark, not under curse as to individual, spiritual, and eternal interests; but only as to national and temporal interests. As long as they are out of Palestine and under national curse they are to be few in number. When the national curse is removed, by restoration to Palestine, then they are to be multiplied and no longer few.

The Anglo-Saxons are an innumerable host, and enjoying as much national prosperity and blessing as any nation on the face of the earth, and are still out of Palestine; so that if there be any nation on the face of the earth not Israelites, surely it must be the Anglo-Saxons.

To meet this formidable difficulty, some of our opponents, quite innocent of Hebrew, have tried to make out that *few in number* really means an innumerable host. It is true that the words in Deuteronomy 4:27, translated, “**few in number**,” are not exactly the same as those translated “**few in number**” in Deuteronomy 28:62; the former being במתי מעט—*methay mispar*—men of number, or men easily numbered; or, as Gesenius translates, “*few men*.”

Jacob makes use of these same words as recorded in Genesis 34:30, as to the meaning of which there can be no doubt. The latter passage, Deuteronomy 28:62, has במתי מעט—*methay me'aat*—few men. Here also there can be no ambiguity as to the meaning, especially when the next line confirms the meaning by contrast; “**Whereas ye were as the stars of heaven for multitude.**”

The same word מַהֲאֵת—*mahaat* is used as a verb in the passage quoted from Jeremiah 30:19, “**they shall not be few**,” and its meaning is abundantly confirmed by the context preceding and following; standing at once in contrast with “**multiply**” and in harmony with “**they shall not be small**.” There are numbers of passages in the Old Testament confirmatory of the meaning “**few in number**.”

4. Our fourth point is founded upon Genesis 17:10, 14. “**Every man child among you shall be circumcised . . . And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant.**”

Circumcision was the initiatory rite into the privileges of the national covenant, and is so still. The Anglo-Saxons, being an uncircumcised people, are excluded from all the privileges of the national covenant. A dwarf may as reasonably expect to enter the royal guards, where the condition is six feet in height, as an uncircumcised Anglo-Saxon to share blessings belonging exclusively to circumcised Israelites.

5. Our fifth point is of solemn importance. All Anglo-Saxons (even if Israelites) are either *believers* or *unbelievers*: if believers in Christ, they are detached from the national Israel, and consequently from the future temporal interests and destiny of the nation. Indeed they form part of an entirely new body—the Church, the Body of Christ, which will be with her Lord before the national Israel have full and peaceable possession of their earthly inheritance.

All believers in Christ—Jews and Gentiles—secure this higher calling of the Church—a heavenly calling—and will be married to the Lamb before Israel’s national conversion and mission to all nations. If *unbelievers* (even if Israelites), they are under the curse of a broken law (See Galatians 3:10).

“**For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.**”

There is no possibility of escape from this curse and its consequences but by a saving interest in the work of our Divine Substitute; then we may say, “**Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us**” (Galatians 3:13).

All Israelites, therefore, who are truly converted, are detached from the nation and secure the higher calling of the Church; and all who are unconverted are under the curse of a broken law, and suffering national chastisement to this day.

This scriptural view accords with the national condition of the Jews exactly to this day: but it scarcely accords with the circumstances and condition of the Anglo-Saxons.

Let us repeat these five points.

1st. The people shall dwell alone and not be reckoned among the nations. This is true of the Jews, but not true of the Anglo-Saxons.

2nd. Israel is to remain many days without king or prince, and without a true knowledge of God. The Anglo-Saxons are not in these circumstances.

3rd. The twelve tribes, out of Palestine, are to be *few* in number, under national curse, and multiplied and *no longer few* when restored. But the Anglo-Saxons, though out of Palestine, are enjoying national blessing, and are not few in number.

4th. The penalty of uncircumcision is excision. The Anglo-Saxons are uncircumcised.

5th. Anglo-Saxons are either saints or sinners; if saints, then detached (though Israelites) from the nation, and incorporated with the Church; if sinners, then under the curse of law. So that it will not do to urge the plea, that, because the Anglo-Saxons are nominally Christian, therefore they have escaped the curse of the law: for they can only escape that curse by true conversion, which detaches them from the nation and secures to them a heavenly calling and a heavenly inheritance.

These five points based on plain passages of Scripture seem fairly and unanswerably to prove that if any people on the face of the earth are not Israelites, the Anglo-Saxons are not Israelites.

If, then, the Anglo-Saxons are not Israelites, *Where are they?*

We now address ourselves to this question. Let us take a rapid glance at the nation's history.

About 1740 B.C., Jacob, a grandson of Abraham, was named *Israel*, and his children were naturally called Israelites. The descendants of Judah, who was a son of Jacob or Israel, are as really Israelites as are the descendants of any other of Israel's sons.

In 975 B.C., ten tribes revolted under Jeroboam, who became their first king; established the seat of government at Shechem, afterwards at Tirzah, till Omri in 925 B.C. bought from Shemer the hill of Samaria, which remained the seat of government till the captivity in 721 B.C. This ten-tribed kingdom, being in the majority, took the honored name Israel. The two tribes—Judah and Benjamin, with Levi—had their seat of government at Jerusalem, and their kingdom was called the kingdom of Judah from the name of its leading tribe.

In 721 B.C., in the 6th year of Hezekiah and 9th of Hoshea, Samaria was taken by Shalmaneser (II Kings 18:9-11).

In 606 to 588 B.C., the kingdom of Judah was destroyed and the people carried to Babylon. In 536 B.C., about 50,000 were restored.

Now let us retrace our steps over this period of Israel's history, from 975 B.C., when the twelve tribes were divided into two kingdoms, down to 536 B.C., when the restoration from Babylon took place; and we shall find in the Word of God a large amount of interesting and useful information. Be it observed that the ten tribes, though afterwards apostatizing religiously to secure the permanence of the breach made, in the first instance revolted only on political grounds; so that large numbers of the ten-tribed kingdom of Israel would be likely to fall away to Judah on *religious* grounds. And such we find to have been the case.

Let us look at the commencement of the history of the divided kingdoms, 975 B.C. (See II Chronicles 11:14, 16, 17).

“For the Levites left their suburbs and their possessions, and came to Judah and Jerusalem . . . and after them, *out of all the tribes of Israel*, such as set their hearts to seek the LORD God of Israel, came to Jerusalem, to sacrifice unto the LORD God of their fathers; so they strengthened the kingdom of Judah.”

Here we see that portions of all the ten tribes fell away to Judah on religious grounds, and strengthened Judah.

Now come down to 941 B.C., when Asa, the grandson of Rehoboam, was on the throne of Judah, and see II Chronicles 15:9, **“And he gathered all Judah and Benjamin, and the strangers with them out of Ephraim and Manasseh, and out of Simeon, for they fell to him *out of Israel in abundance*, when they saw that the LORD his God was with him.”** Here we see numbers falling to Judah from the ten-tribed kingdom.

See again in 896 B.C., in the reign of Jehoshaphat, Asa's son, how positions of honour and responsibility were occupied in Judah by **“the chief of the fathers of Israel.”** (II Chronicles 19:8).

“Moreover in Jerusalem did Jehoshaphat set of the Levites, and of the priests, and of the *chief of the fathers of Israel*, for the judgment of the LORD, and for controversies.”

Also in 877 B.C., in the reign of Joash, great-grandson of Jehoshaphat, **“they went about in Judah, and gathered the Levites out of all the cities of Judah, and the *chief of the fathers of Israel*, and they came to Jerusalem”** (II Chronicles 23:2).

Now let us come down to the time of King Hezekiah, to 726 B.C., about five years before the captivity of the ten tribes (See II Chronicles 30:1, 5, 10, 11, 18, 25).

“Hezekiah sent to all Israel and Judah, and wrote letters to Ephraim and Manasseh, that they should come to the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, to keep the passover unto the LORD God of Israel . . . so they established a decree to make a proclamation throughout all Israel, from Beersheba even to Dan, that they should come to keep the passover unto the LORD God of Israel at Jerusalem . . . so the posts passed from city to city through the country of Ephraim and Manasseh even unto Zebulun; but they laughed them to scorn and mocked them; nevertheless divers of Asher and Manasseh and of Zebulun humbled themselves and came to Jerusalem . . . for a multitude of people, even many of Ephraim and Manasseh, Issachar and Zebulun, had not cleansed themselves, yet did they eat the passover . . . And all the congregation of Judah, with the priests and the Levites, and *all the congregation that came out of Israel*, and the strangers that came out of the land of Israel, and that *dwelt in Judah* rejoiced.” See also II Chronicles 31:6, where we read of the **“children of *Israel* and Judah, that *dwelt* in the cities of Judah.”**

We have now traced the history of the ten-tribed kingdom of Israel from the time of its separation from Judah in 975 B.C., down to the period of its destruction as a kingdom by Shalmaneser, 721 B.C. And during that period of 254 years, in which the kingdoms of Judah and Israel existed side by side in Palestine, large numbers out of the ten tribes fell away to Judah on religious grounds, and thus proved their detestation of idolatry and their loyalty to the God of Israel.

So far we have found the Israelites in **“abundance”** amongst their brethren of Judah. This is authentic history, clear fact, inspired information; let us note it carefully. Now let us seek information from another stage of history, from 721 B.C. to the period subsequent to the return from Babylon in 536 B.C.; and we shall find the facts as interesting as they are instructive and authentic.

We wish now to show from Scripture that the two countries, Assyria and Babylon, were at this period virtually one, the latter being subject to the former (See II Kings 17:24).

When Esarhaddon, son of Sennacherib, reigned over Nineveh and Babylon, 677 B.C., **“The King of Assyria brought men from Babylon . . . and placed them in the cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel.”** See also II Chronicles 33:11: **“Wherefore the LORD brought upon them the captains of the host of the King of Assyria, who took Manasseh among the thorns, and bound him with fetters, and carried him to Babylon.”**

Now let us take the period of the reign of Josiah, the great-grandson of Hezekiah, 625 B.C., or about ninety-six years after the ten tribes had been taken captive, and about twenty years before the captivity of Judah.

Saracus was now King of Assyria. Nabopolassar, his general, was sent to oppose Cyaxares and his Medes in their advances on Nineveh. The general became a traitor to Saracus, and went over to the Median, who gave his daughter Amyitis to the general's son, Nebuchadnezzar. Cyaxares and Nabopolassar shared the Assyrian Empire; the former took the North and Eastern portions, and the latter the valley of the Euphrates and Syria, Phoenicia and Palestine.

Have we any information respecting any of the ten tribes at this period, about one hundred years after their captivity? See II Chronicles 34:9 and 35:17, 18:

“And when they came to Hilkiah the high priest, they delivered the money that was brought into the house of God, which the Levites that kept the doors had gathered of the hand of *Manasseh and Ephraim*, and of all the remnant of Israel; and of all Judah and Benjamin; and they returned to Jerusalem . . . And the *children of Israel* that were present kept the Passover at that time, and the feast of unleavened bread seven days. And there was no passover like to that kept in Israel from the days of Samuel the prophet; neither did all the kings of Israel keep such a passover as Josiah kept, and the priests, and Levites, and *all Judah and Israel* that were present, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.”

Here it appears that great numbers of the poor and the pious of the ten tribes remained in the land and united themselves with Judah in the celebration of their national festivals and in the general worship of God; and that they also contributed liberally of their substance, for money was taken **“of the hand of *Manasseh and Ephraim*, and of *all the remnant of Israel*.”**

Now take the date 606 B.C., when Jerusalem was taken by Nebuchadnezzar and the people taken captive to Babylon; and there can be no reasonable doubt that numbers of Israelites, mingled with Judah, accompanied Judah to Babylon.

So far our way seems perfectly clear.

We may now ask, have we reason for supposing that any considerable number of Israel returned with Judah on restoration from Babylon in 536 B.C.?

Let us see. It must be observed that the Assyrian empire is now merged in the kingdom of Babylon, and

- The *King* of Babylon is called the *King of Assyria* (See II Kings 23:29).
- The *country* of Babylon is called *Assyria* (See Jeremiah 2:18).

“What hast thou to do in the way of Assyria, to drink the waters of the river.” (מִי נַהַר: *may nahar*, “the waters of the river”—Euphrates). And the *people* of Babylon are called *Assyrians*? (See Lamentations 5:6).

“We have given the hand to the Egyptians and to the Assyrians, to be satisfied with bread.”

Thus the king, country, and people of Babylon are identified with the king, country, and people of Assyria, at the time of the Babylonish Captivity. It is important to notice this carefully.

Let us now briefly examine the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, which bring us down to the restoration from Babylon, 536 B.C.; and here we shall find, not only that Assyria and Babylon are identical, but also that *Persia*, *Assyria*, and *Babylon* are one.

- See Ezra 4:5, where Cyrus is called *King of Persia*, and in 5:13 is called King of *Babylon*.
- Then again, in 4:5, Darius is called “**King of Persia**” and in 6:22 is called “**King of Assyria**.”
- Again in Ezra 4:7, Artaxerxes is called King of *Persia*, but in Nehemiah 13:6 he is called “**King of Babylon**.”

Coming down now to the book of Esther, 521 B.C., fifteen years after the restoration from Babylon, we find the Medo-Persian Empire extending over one hundred and twenty-seven provinces, from India to Ethiopia, including in its range the ancient kingdoms of Assyria and Babylon. From these considerations it is perfectly clear that Israel was as free to return to Palestine as was Judah. The way was as wide open to the one as to the other.

It would seem therefore as likely that the Israelites of the ten tribes should return, as that many of the Israelites of Judah and Benjamin—called Jews—should voluntarily remain behind. It is a singular fact, that, while great numbers of Israelites remained in Persia after the restoration from Babylonish captivity—witness the book of Esther—they are uniformly called Jews; the word Israel never occurring once throughout the book, whilst the words *Jew* and *Jews* occur between *forty* and *fifty* times. On the other hand, the term *Israel* is of frequent occurrence in both Ezra and Nehemiah as referring to those restored, “**all Israel in their cities**” (Ezra 2:70).

Then Ezra tells us that when he went up to Jerusalem, he “**gathered together out of Israel chief men**” (Chap. 7:28) to accompany him.

Then we have the very striking evidence furnished by the fact that sacrifices were offered for the whole twelve tribes (See Ezra 6:16, 17; 8:35).

“And the children of Israel, the priests, and the Levites, and the rest of the children of the captivity, kept the dedication of this house of God with joy; and offered at the dedication of this house of God a hundred bullocks, two hundred rams, four hundred lambs: and for a sin offering for all Israel, twelve he-goats, according to the number of the tribes of Israel . . . The children of those that had been carried away, which were come out of the captivity, offered burnt offerings unto the God of Israel, twelve bullocks for all Israel” &c.

The entire congregation of restored captives—people, priests, and Levites—consisted only of 42,360; in addition to these there were 7,337 men-servants and maid-servants, and 245 singing men and singing women (Nehemiah 7:66, 67) making a total of 49,942, a few short of fifty thousand.

Numbers of Jews remained behind, as the book of Esther testifies, and established influential schools and colleges which gave birth to the Babylonian Talmud, which is really “The Talmud;” the Jerusalem Talmud, though having the same Mishna, and associated with the Holy City, possessing but little influence in comparison with the Babylonian.

As those who remained behind were called Jews and not Israel, and as those who were restored were called, not only Jews, but Israel, and sacrifices were offered for the whole twelve tribes, it is a just and natural inference that a considerable proportion of those who returned represented the ten tribes of Israel.

Now what is our general inference from these wanderings. Bible in hand, after the ten tribes from 975 B.C. to 521 B.C.? Simply this—that sufficient numbers of the ten tribes of Israel while in the land fell away to Judah on religious grounds; and a sufficient number returned from Babylon on political and religious grounds, to render the restored captives properly representative of the entire nation; so that should no other people in the world ever present a reasonable claim to Israelitish descent, the people known as Jews may be regarded as fairly entitled to be representative of the interests and destiny of the whole twelve tribes.

But it may be asked, and not without reason, Does this cover the entire question of the ten tribes? Have all the Israelites of the ten tribes been absorbed by the Israelites of the two tribes?

It may be frankly confessed that certain plain predictions of the Word of God seem to necessitate the restoration to Palestine, in the *future*, of a people known as descendants of the ten tribes of Israel, and designated “**the outcasts of Israel**,” in contradistinction from the “**dispersed of Judah**” (Isaiah 11).

The same conclusion would be arrived at by a careful examination of Ezekiel 37.

After a long period of national death, the constituent elements of the nation—the people—represented by the “**dry bones**,” are brought together, national life restored, and Palestine again possessed by the whole twelve tribes: the union of Israel and Judah represented by the union of two sticks, followed by the declaration of Israel’s God, “**I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all; and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all.**”

From these passages and others of similar import yet unfulfilled the search for the ten tribes amongst some portion of the world’s present population should be thought neither useless nor hopeless.

It is a singular, though rather humiliating circumstance, that the ten tribes have been sought in almost every other country but the one into which they were taken captive. Some Welsh people have told us that they must be the ten tribes because some Welsh words are like some Hebrew words.

Some Irish people have told us the Irish are the ten tribes because they have never persecuted the Jews, and it would be unnatural to persecute their brethren; forgetting that they have had few if any Jews to persecute; and forgetting, also, that Irish Romanists have sometimes persecuted their Protestant brethren, and that a brother offended is hard to be won.

Another has found some Israelitish features and customs amongst the North-American Indians, and has therefore concluded them to be the ten tribes. It would be strange, indeed, while possessing a common human nature, if they had no features or customs in common.

Others have thought they are to be found in the Chinese, and others in the Afghans, though there is no satisfactory evidence in either case.

It is, nevertheless, not only possible, but probable, that some of the descendants of the ten tribes may be found among the Afghans, and others among the Chinese, such as the small colony of Israelites at Kai-fung-foo, in the province of Honun.

Others, again, have maintained against the clearest Scripture testimony that the Anglo-Saxons constitute the lost ten tribes, wresting, garbling, twisting, and misapplying Scripture texts in a manner most distressing to the devout lover of the Word of the Living God.

If, then, the Anglo-Saxons are not the ten tribes, *who are? and where are they?*

We answer at once—The Nestorians in the mountains of Kurdistan, and by the Lake Oroomiah, in Persia, as shown in a most interesting book written by the late Dr. Asahel Grant, for many years a self-denying and successful medical missionary, sent out by the American Board to that people in 1835. In his researches the principle adopted is the most simple and natural, viz., “*Search for a thing where it was lost.*” Confiding ourselves to the guidance of Dr. Grant, we submit a brief summary of the overwhelming evidence he adduces in favor of the Nestorians being the lost tribes of Israel.

1st. Let us notice what we would term *the sacred historical evidence*.

In the Scripture account of the deportation, Pul and Tiglath-Pileser first carried away the trans-Jordanic Israelites, Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh; and next, about nineteen years later, Shalmaneser carried away the remaining seven and a half tribes of the cis-Jordanic Israelites. The whole ten, however, were placed in the same district of Assyria proper, and the adjoining country of Media. The region, then, into which the ten tribes were carried was that which the Greeks commonly called Adiabene. It lies N.E. of Nineveh; S.E. of Lake Van; W. of the Lake Oroomiah; and answers to the original Assyria proper, as contradistinguished from the more widely extended Assyrian empire (George Stanley Faber’s “*Sacred Calendar of Prophecy*,” in Appendix).

Sennacherib’s boast was that the Assyrian kings had destroyed the inhabitants of this region; thus, the country being partially depopulated, was ready for the captive Israelites.

Now notice the evidence of *prophecy*.

Prophecy says, “**The LORD shall set His hand again the second time to recover the remnant of His people which shall be left from Assyria . . . He shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth . . . and there shall be a highway for the remnant of His people which shall be left from Assyria, like as it was to Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt**” (Isaiah 11:11, 12, 16).

Please to notice that in the eleventh verse Assyria is the first place mentioned; prominence is also given to Assyria in the last verse; and then observe that in the twelfth verse “**the outcasts of Israel**” are named before “**the dispersed of Judah**,” which seems to indicate that “Assyria” and “outcasts of Israel” were intended to be associated.

Who then are to come from Assyria if not the outcasts of Israel? And whence are to come the outcasts of Israel if not from Assyria? History says the ten tribes were taken into Assyria; prophecy says they are to be brought out of Assyria. The plain inference is *they are there*.

Now let us take the evidence of *secular history*. Josephus (Ant, b. xi., c. v., § 2) having given an account of the friendly relations of Xerxes, the son of Darius, towards the Jews, and having expressed those intentions in a letter to Ezra, says,

“So he (Ezra) read the epistle at Babylon to those Jews that were there; but he kept the epistle itself, and sent a copy of it to all those of his own nation that were in Media; and when these Jews had understood what piety the king had towards God, and what kindness he had for Ezra, they were all greatly pleased; nay, many of them took their effects with them, and came to Babylon, as very desirous of going down to Jerusalem; but then the entire body of the people of Israel remained in that country; wherefore there are but two tribes in Asia and Europe subject to the Romans, while the ten tribes are beyond Euphrates till now, and are an immense multitude, and not to be estimated by numbers.”

Again, in Josephus (Wars, b. ii, c. xvi., § 4) we have the magnificent speech of Agrippa, in which he sets forth the overwhelming power of Rome in order to discourage Jewish resistance to that power. Agrippa is represented as addressing the Jews thus:

“Where then are those people whom you are to have for your auxiliaries? Must they come from the parts of the world that are uninhabited? for all that are in the habitable earth are (under the) Romans; unless any of you extend his hopes as far as beyond the Euphrates, and suppose that those of your own nation that dwell in Adiabene will come to your assistance; but certainly these will not embarrass themselves with an unjustifiable war, nor, if they should follow such ill advice, will the Parthians permit them so to do.”

It is plainly evident from secular history that down to the first century of the Christian era the ten tribes were considered to be still in the same district into which they were first taken.

Now let us come down to the fifth century, in which Jerome, the author of the Vulgate, in his notes on Hosea, says: “Unto this day the ten tribes are subject to the kings of the Persians, nor has their captivity ever been loosed” (tom. vi., p. 7). And again he says: “The ten tribes inhabit at this day the cities and mountains of the Medes” (tom. vi., p. 80).

Thus we have historic evidence down to the fifth century, that the ten tribes, apart from those portions not already mixed with Judah, were still in the place into which they were first taken.

Had they ever migrated from these countries the native histories must have mentioned an event of such importance. But history, observes Dr. Grant, is silent upon the subject. The native histories, Persian, Turkish, and Arabic, which are numerous, say nothing of the removal of the captive Israelites from this country, and tradition is equally silent upon the subject.

Buchanan in his “*Researches*” very truly observes:

“The Jews have a never-ceasing communication with each other in the East; so that, when anything interesting to the nation of the Jews takes place, the rumor will spread rapidly throughout all Asia.”

Had the ten tribes moved, it is incredible that the Jews should have known nothing of it, and they are silent on the subject.

So much for the testimony of *prophecy*, and of *sacred* and *secular history*.

The ten tribes were taken into Assyria in 721 B.C. History down to the fifth century of the Christian era says they are still there. Since that time no history or tradition at all reliable gives any account of their removal. And unfulfilled prophecy says they are to be restored from Assyria. The plain inference is—*They are still there*.

Lingual evidence—

Language is another kind of evidence of the Israelitish origin of the Nestorians of Kurdistan. They speak at this day a dialect of the Syriac, which can scarcely be accounted for on any other theory than that of their Israelitish origin. The ten-tribed kingdom, bordering on Syria, and subject to incursions from the Syrians, naturally learned the Syriac tongue, and took the knowledge of that tongue with them into the fastnesses of Kurdistan.

It may not be out of place to give here a little personal experience.

About the year 1860 or '61, my morning daily paper announced the arrival in London of two representatives of this ancient people, and that they were located at the Home for Asiatics at Limehouse.

My wife and I immediately went over to see them. We saw them. I made myself understood through the Hebrew of which the Syriac is a cognate as well as the Chaldee. We invited them to our house to meet some friends, and to spend an evening with us. They told us there is no doubt of their Israelitish origin amongst themselves. A most interesting evening was closed by these strangers with reading and prayer. I fetched from my study two copies of the Peshito version of the New Testament in Syriac; the elder one read a chapter and prayed, and afterwards sent me several slips of paper with his autograph in Syriac for the friends he had met. Anyone looking the elder in the face would have no difficulty in perceiving at once the Jewish features.

Amongst these Nestorians, who are nominal Christians, there are nominal Israelites, called Jews. Both the one and the other trace their origin to the ten tribes. The Nestorians are charged by the Jews with having apostatized from the religion of their fathers. They are not called Nestorians because converted by Nestorius, but because they sympathized with some views held by Nestorius, and for which he was considered a heretic by the Greek Church at Constantinople. The Christianized portion claim to have been brought to the Christian faith by Apostles sent to them from the Church at Jerusalem.

Their traditions state that their forefathers went up to Jerusalem to keep the “**feast of weeks**” (*Shevuoth*)— Pentecost, on the opening of the present dispensation; that they caught Pentecostal fire, carried it back to their people, and that the Church at Jerusalem, recognizing the special claim of these their brethren, sent out Thomas, Thaddeus, and Bartholomew—names still honored amongst them—as their first missionaries.

Now let us turn to the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, and we shall find gathered at this national festival “**Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and Proselytes, Cretes, and Arabians.**” So there were Israelites—“**Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia**”—from these very districts into which the ten tribes were first taken captive.

How wonderfully tradition, history, and Scripture agree on this interesting question! In the light of such facts how full of meaning become such expressions as “**to the strangers scattered,**” “**to the dispersed among the Gentiles,**” and, “**to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting.**”

Again, “*Benai Israel*”—Children of Israel—is used generally to designate the lineal origin of the Nestorians. Jewish names are also very common amongst them, as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Elijah, &c. Jewish features are also strongly marked in the faces of this people.

They have also amongst them many modified observances of the Mosaic ritual; as peace offerings; vows; first fruits and tithes; forbidden food; ceremonial impurities; and separation of women.

Dr. Grant also gives abundant evidence that their social and domestic customs; their forms of salutation; their hospitality; their regard for the poor; their entertainments; dress; ornaments; espousals; marriages; and occupations; are, with various slight modifications, the same as those of the ancient Israelites. This chapter would however soon grow to a volume, if we were to give details of all these interesting points. To those who wish to pursue this subject further in this direction, we must say, read Dr. Grant’s “*Nestorians, or Lost Tribes.*”

We do not, by any means, consider it necessary to believe that these Nestorians and Jews in Oroomiah and Kurdistan constitute the totality of ten-tribed Israelites, over and above those mingled with Judah; but we firmly believe that the evidence in favor of their being at least the nucleus of the ten tribes is perfectly satisfactory. The Yezidees may be another portion. The Malabar Jews— black and white—may be another portion. The few in Kae-fung-foo may be another. The 10,000 families discovered in Daghestan on the Caspian Sea may be another. And the quarter of a million of Falashas in Abyssinia may very likely be another portion. But there are the very strongest reasons for doubting the Israelitish origin of the Anglo-Saxons.

Having shown, we believe successfully, where the ten tribes of Israel *are not*, and also where they *are*, we now propose briefly to show the mischievous character of this modern theory—that the Anglo-Saxons are the lost tribes of Israel.

What harm, it is asked, can come out of the theory of our Israelitish origin?

We answer, it diverts attention from the elect nation destined in the revealed purpose of God to be the channel of blessing to the world.

Satan is no doubt a deep student of the Word of God. And why? To ascertain God's way of taking the world out of his grasp and destroying his power. When our blessed Lord answered Satan's temptations by "**it is written**," "**it is written**," we do not find Satan inquiring anything about the nature and authority of the documents referred to; it is implied he knew all about them, and that he reads and studies the Scriptures in order to use all his skill in thwarting the Lord's revealed purpose.

The power of Satan is amazing and appalling, but it is limited in degree and in duration, though it will be effectually crushed only on the return of the Lord Jesus, when he will be chained for a thousand years. Surely Satan must know that all the families of the earth are to be blessed in Abraham's seed; and that God has declared, "**This people have I formed for Myself, they shall show forth My praise.**"

Thus Satan succeeded in persuading the Christian Church, in early times, that she was a spiritual Israel, to whom all blessings promised to the national Israel exclusively belonged; and that to the literal and national Israel belonged only the curses, literally understood.

This doctrine has been embodied in commentaries, and proclaimed from most of the pulpits of Christendom, and is still largely held and preached at this day. What has been the result of this doctrine? *The "Dark Ages "for the Church; and cruelty at worst, and indifference at best towards the Jew.*

The promises given to the Church, and the curses given to the Jew, any kind of conduct on the part of Christendom, however cruel, was considered as rather pleasing than otherwise to God.

This was a grand masterstroke of Satan, by which he at once secured a corrupt, ignorant, persecuting, dead Church; intensified unbelief amongst Israel; and a world asleep in the arms of the Wicked One.

Within the last half-century, however, another principle has been largely adopted in the reading and exposition of truth about the Jews, viz., that of allowing the blessings and the curses to bear a *literal* meaning to the *literal* Israel.

An intelligent and devout body of Christians, called "Brethren," as well as many in the Episcopal Church distinguished for piety and learning, have taught the Church of Christ a lesson she is slow to learn:

- 1st, That the book we call the Bible most certainly means something;
- 2nd, It probably means what it says.

In other words, instead of making the Scriptures, by far-fetched and fanciful interpretations, mean anything but what they say, they substitute the sound and simple principle applicable to all literature —sacred and secular—

*“If the plain and obvious sense
make good sense,
seek no other sense.”*

Ah! says Satan, but this will never do. This will land the Church in the doctrine and hope of the premillennial advent, and tend to produce unworldliness: this won't do. Again, with the unworldliness and increased power of the Church, will come an earnest desire to know and do the revealed will of God. The natural and national Israel will then take a prominent place in the Church's prayer and effort, in order that through Israel the original and unchanged purpose of the Lord may be realized in the world's blessing. Don't you see the device of Satan? Anyhow he must keep the real Israel under the power of unbelief, or he will soon lose his power over the nations.

So now we have another masterpiece of Satan; a determined struggle to get the Anglo-Saxons to believe, without the slightest evidence, and, indeed, against the clearest Scripture testimony, that they are the natural Israel to whom all the promises are made, and promises *only*; and then by a hard and arbitrary line drawn between Judah and Israel, as though Jews were not Israelites, to hand over all the curses, and curses only, to the Jews. This we believe to be the nature of the mischief of this modern theory, and it is one of the leading latter-day errors of these “**perilous times.**”

Cost what it may, we faithfully, solemnly, yet affectionately, warn the Christian Church against this latter-day error, as mischievous and dangerous, as it is flattering, fascinating, and unscriptural.

“Thus saith the Lord of Hosts: In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all the languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you; for we have heard that God is with you” (Zechariah 8:23).

“For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book; If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away out of the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book” (Revelation 22:18, 19).

~ end of chapter 7 ~

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“ISRAEL MY GLORY”

Israel’s Mission, and Missions to Israel

by

John Wilkinson

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CHAPTER EIGHT

THE NUMBER AND DISTRIBUTION OF THE JEWS; THEIR SOCIAL INFLUENCE; THEIR RELIGIOUS CONDITION AS JEWS; AND THEIR PRESENT ATTITUDE TOWARDS CHRISTIANITY

Their Number and Distribution

The number of Jews has been variously estimated at five, six, seven, eight to ten or twelve millions. Statisticians have largely guessed at the number, some cautious ones knocking off a million or two; whilst the more sanguine have added a million or two.

It is not possible to take an exact census of the Jews in any country, and ordinary difficulties are increased in getting at their number in out-of-the-way places and in countries only half civilized.

Physically they are a remarkable people. They flourish in every clime. Where statistics have been taken they show a larger proportion of births and a smaller proportion of deaths than those of the general population. The number of still-born children amongst the Jews is only about two-thirds of the number amongst the Gentiles as the proportion of the same total of births in each case. About the same proportion holds as to the children dying within the first twelve months of their age. Indeed they are an exceptional people physically, as well as in other respects, to which their dietary laws and abstemious habits may have contributed.

Their total number at the present time cannot be less than 10,000,000.

Their Political Status and Social Influence

During the last half or three-quarters of a century the Jews have gradually gained civil and religious liberty throughout the civilized world. Russia and Rumania are almost the only exceptions in nominally Christian lands. Their exceptional ability, coupled with their industrious and sober habits and love of learning, is bringing them by large numbers into the front rank of influence for good or for evil in every part of the world.

In the march of intellect the Jews in Europe have taken rapid strides since the opening of the nineteenth century. Their mental endowments, their educational attainments, and their material wealth have awakened feelings of envy and jealousy in the hearts of their Gentile neighbors.

This, sadly, has burst out into anti-Semitism in Germany and into open persecution in Russia and Romania. Indeed there is a Jewish question forcing itself on the consideration of nearly every government on the face of the earth. The rich Jews are the objects of envy and jealousy, and in many cases are socially ostracized and hated; whilst by others, the poor Jews, persecuted and driven from one country to another, are felt to be a burden by all.

The poor Jews are willing to work for much lower wages than will satisfy the Gentiles, specially when the latter are associated with trades unions. This arouses hatred amongst the working classes towards the Jews; the hatred is inflamed by agitators, and thus the Jews are made to feel that they are unwelcome and uncomfortable in all lands.

It must also be confessed that a considerable number of poor Jews sympathize with the Nihilists of Russia, with the Socialists of Germany, with the Communists of France and with the Socialists of our own country. The wrongs and persecutions of ages have predisposed them to listen to demagogues and agitators, who propose to right all wrong by turning society upside down, instead of listening to their own inspired Psalmist, who teaches that God's way is to turn society downside up, He "raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth the needy out of the dunghill; That he may set him with princes, even with the princes of his people" (Psalm 113:7, 8).

These various influences are now at work in raising a Jewish question throughout Europe, which is taking the form of open dislike, not on religious, but on social and commercial grounds, and which, in the overruling Providence of God, are weakening the attachment of the Jews to the lands of their dispersion, and preparing them, in the probable near future, for restoration to the land of their fathers.

Their Religious Condition as Jews

Many Jews are still bigoted religionists, but few if any are to be found of the type of Old Testament saints. Talmudical Judaism is still powerful amongst large numbers of Russian Jews, especially in Poland, and also in the Holy Land. This state of things obtains exclusively amongst those Jews uninfluenced by a higher education and Gentile culture. The power of the Talmud is broken in almost every other country. Numbers of Jews in Germany, France, America, and in England are avowed Rationalists, and care as little for Moses as for the Lord Jesus Christ. Some of these so-called reformers are seeking to abolish circumcision; others have ceased to observe their dietary laws; others wish to change their Sabbath to Sunday; and others advocate mixed marriages.

They are further divided into two separate communities called respectively *Sephardim* and *Ashkenazim*—the former representing the Spanish and Portuguese Jews, and the latter the German and Polish. These respective communities have synagogues, rabbis, including a chief rabbi, liturgy, and even a pronunciation of the Hebrew language exclusively their own. Nine-tenths of the Jews in our country belong to the Ashkenazim.

There is a somewhat influential sect of Jews called *Chasidim*. These are strict and fanatical, and profess to possess miraculous power. They are located chiefly in Austria and Russia.

A small number of Jews are called *Caraites*; are rejecters of tradition, and are located chiefly in the Crimea. These enjoy special privileges and are protected by the Government.

A considerable number in Europe are simply like their Gentile neighbors—money-getters, pleasure-lovers, worldlings, who from habit alone observe some of the sacred days and ceremonies of Judaism.

Some Jews in England have recently succeeded in their demands that prayers for the restoration of sacrifices shall be eliminated from their liturgies; whilst other and more orthodox Jews declare that this is an acknowledgment that the sacrifices were temporary and typical, and will thus confirm the Christian view of them.

Amongst and beyond these varieties there is a truth-seeking portion earnestly desirous of knowing God's way of saving sinners; thoroughly weary of the empty forms and burdensome traditions of modern Rabbinism; and considerably impressed with the power and influence of Christianity in the world, and also with the fact that amongst the best people in the world there survives, and even increases, a strong personal affection for Jesus of Nazareth.

The Present Attitude of Jews towards Christianity

A marvellous change in Jewish thought and feeling respecting Christ and Christianity has taken place during the last half century. In the early part of the present century, Jewish converts were very few, and Christian ministers of Jewish origin scarcely to be found. Now there are scores of thousands of Jewish believers, and hundreds of Christian Jews who preach the Gospel of Christ.

In the early part of this century blasphemy of the name of Jesus was perhaps the rule; now such blasphemy is exceptional. Jews, even eminent rabbis, are speaking and writing in the most respectful terms of Him, designating Him the greatest moral reformer that ever visited our earth.

Then, the New Testament was a prohibited book, or received only to be torn to pieces, or trampled under foot; now, it is gratefully received and read by hundreds of thousands.

The claims of Jesus are more widely and deeply considered to-day than at any former period since apostolic times. The hunger for, and the influence of the Hebrew New Testament is the most encouraging feature in modern missions to the Jews, and is an important sign of the times.

New efforts in Israel's interest are being organized in various lands. We welcome and rejoice over every new effort characterized by zeal, love, faith, and holy enterprise. This changed attitude of the Jews towards Christianity is the result mainly of the changed attitude, not of Christ, but of Christians towards the Jewish people—the result of patient, prayerful, persistent obedience to Christ in the proclamation of His glorious Gospel.

Will nothing induce the Church of Christ, in her desire to evangelize the world, to observe the Apostolic order “**to the Jew first**”?

In the observance of this order she would be on the line of obedience and consequently on the line of blessing. The Jews are accessible in nearly all lands, and the Gentiles in all lands are accessible to the Jews. The demands of the Word of God, and the needs of the world, call with a loud voice to the Church of Christ to “**go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel**”—“**to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile.**”

~ end of chapter 8 ~

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CHAPTER NINE

THE PLACE OF THE JEW IN THE PRESENT DISPENSATION

We have considered the national election of Israel; the purpose of that election—to bless the world; and the guaranteed preservation of the nation till that purpose has been accomplished.

- We have also considered the promises made to the fathers of the nation as neither annulled nor transferred, but confirmed by Christ.
- We have also considered the rejection of the nation—its causes, consequences, and duration.
- We have also considered the restoration of the nation, and the time of Jacob’s trouble.
- We have also considered the position and mission of Israel in the millennial age.
- We have also considered the throne of David as occupied by David’s Son and Lord.
- We have also considered the question of the ten tribes of Israel—where are they not, and where are they?

Thus we have endeavored to give a strictly Scriptural outline of the Divine purpose and plan in the election and preservation of a people wonderful from their beginning hitherto.

We come now to consider the *place* of the Jew in the present dispensation. This dispensation is parenthetical and elective. Parenthetical—as thrown in between the sixty-ninth and the seventieth weeks of Daniel, or between the ascension and the second advent of the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is the dispensation of the Holy Spirit for gathering the Church—an election of individuals from all nations during the period that the elect nation is scattered into all lands: both the gathering of the Church and the scattering of Israel continuing till the close of the times of the Gentiles which are now nearly run out.

It is not the revealed purpose of God to convert the world during the present dispensation; for the Scriptures give definite and clear testimony to the doctrine that corruption and judgment characterize the close of this age.

No nation, town, city, or even village, has yet been converted during nearly 1900 years: and besides, the tide of unbelief and corruption is rolling in with marvellous force all over Christendom.

Beyond all this, Palestine waits for Israel's restoration, and the world waits for Israel's conversion: but if Israel were converted in the present dispensation what would become of God's guarantee to preserve the nation as such to the end of time? It is well known that the Church is bound in loyalty to her Lord to seek the conversion of the Jews, and it is equally well known that when the Jews become Christians they soon lose their nationality, and become incorporated with the Church. If this dispensation be the last, and intended to convert the world, then the nation of Israel must be converted in this dispensation and instrumentally produce universal blessing. But if such should be the case, then the Jews would lose their distinctive nationality, and become, with believing Gentiles, members of the Church of Christ in whom there is neither Jew nor Greek.

To leave the Jews alone, that God's purpose in their preservation as a separate nation may be secured, is simply to disobey the Lord Jesus Christ; and to secure the conversion of the Jewish nation in this dispensation would frustrate the purpose of God in their national preservation.

How is this difficulty met? By "**the remnant according to the election of grace**" being gathered now, as the Jewish portion of the Church, the Bride of Christ, and "**all Israel saved**" on the return of the Lord to Mount Zion.

Then what is the place of the Jew in this present dispensation?

God's Word is our only but sufficient guide. Our Lord says plainly "**Preach the Gospel to every creature.**" Exposition and argument are quite unnecessary. The disobedient do not wish either; the obedient do not need either. "**Every creature,**" or "*the whole creation,*" surely includes the Jew. About this there can be no question. But many say Yes, but let us attend to the Gentiles first; they are much more numerous, much more needy, and much more accessible and hopeful.

God's reply is "**There is no difference between the Jew and the Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him. For whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved**" (Romans 10:12, 13).

The Christian Church has said, and still says, both by word and deed, *there is a difference*, a difference in favor of the Gentile. God says there is none. Which is right? Has God ever manifested any unwillingness to save an individual Jew? Has the Church not made a difference? She has, and the responsibility of the results of that difference lies at her door, and not at God's.

Bitter persecution and idolatry have been for ages past the two only forms of Christianity presented to the Jew.

Has the Church any right to complain of the hardness or even blasphemy of the Jew when she considers that the attitude of the Jew towards Christ is the natural result of the conduct of professing Christians. Let the Church of Christ make no difference, and she will soon see that with God there is none. Christ's command to His disciples is to carry the good news of salvation to every individual on the face of the earth; and the Holy Spirit assures us there is no difference between Jew and Gentile, but that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

The Lord who commands His disciples to go and disciple all nations, gives detailed instructions as to the best way—because His way—of carrying out the Master’s orders. During the ministry of our Blessed Lord twelve Jews were called by Him to be His disciples, and **“these twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, *Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel*”** (Matthew 10:5, 6).

And even when the poor Canaanitish woman pressed the case of her demon-possessed daughter, and got her blessing, the Lord plainly told her **“I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel”** (Matthew 15:24).

It is not necessary here to inquire what particular event constituted the rejection of the Lord by His own nation. We know by history and by Scripture that **“He came unto his own, and his own received him not”** (John 1:11).

Does He abandon them because they reject Him? The rejected, crucified, and buried Jesus appears as the risen Lord, enters into conversation with His disciples, expounds **“unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself”** (Luke 24:27), teaching the necessity of His sufferings preparatory to His glory, and the purpose of His death and resurrection. **“Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name *among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem*. And ye are witnesses of these things. And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.”** (Luke 24:46-49).

Let us mark well that the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus was not intended to *hinder* Jewish conversion but to *help* it.

Our risen Lord gives very definite instructions to His disciples. The condition of success is—

- **“Tarry ye in the city until ye be endued (clothed) with power from on high;”**
- **“I send the promise of my Father upon you;”**
- **“Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you.”**

The disciples waited in obedience and got the power. Now the disciples receive fresh instructions as to the method of their work. It is no longer don’t go to the Gentiles; or don’t go to the Samaritans; but, **“ye shall be witnesses unto me both in *Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth*”** (Acts 1:8).

The Lord’s own arrangement is Jerusalem, all Judea, Samaria, uttermost part of the earth. This is clear and precise. No one can plead, “I don’t understand it.”

In evangelizing the world during this dispensation, in which the Holy Ghost is gathering the Church, these definite instructions from our risen Lord must be observed and obeyed if we would have His continued presence and blessing.

If we neglect them in willful disobedience we are weakened in power and limited in blessing; *for the power the Lord has placed at the disposal of His Church is thrown along the line of the Divine plan, and the blessing the Lord has promised is found along the line of obedience to His commands.*

- **“If ye love me keep My commandments.”**
- **“Why call ye Me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say.”**
- **“Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you.”**

Our Lord expects from His disciples prompt, cheerful, loving, unquestioning obedience.

The disciples got the power simply because they did as they were told. They began their mission in Jerusalem as commanded, and got large blessing because on the line of obedience. Three thousand Jews converted under one sermon, and that sermon preached by a converted Jew whose lips a few days before were stained with oaths and curses.

As there were 120 before, there were now at least 3,120 believers—all Jews, men and women. Peter further declares, **“For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.”**

As long as the disciples obey their Lord’s instructions He is with them in power and blessing. **“The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.”**

The converts are still all Jews. The promise of blessing is still to Jews and to their children—their descendants; and the Jews of apostolic times are addressed in words which show that God’s purpose in the Jew and His line of blessing is unaltered—**“Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities”** (Acts 3:25, 26).

In the midst of opposition from priests, captain of the temple, and the Sadducees, we are told that **“many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the *men* was about five thousand”** (Ch. 4:4).

The word is not “souls,” as in the case of the 3000, which is a term including men and women; but the 5000 were men only, so that we may fairly infer the number of believers now to be at least 10,000, for in all times of genuine revivals there are as many women impressed as men, if not more. To show that women were not included in the term men, we have a little further on the statement, **“And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women”** (Acts 5:14).

These 3000 souls; the 5000 men and an equal number of women; and the multitudes both of men and women—were all Jews.

Not only did the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus facilitate Jewish conversion, but His exaltation made for salvation also; for God exalted Him to be **“a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins”** (Ch. 5:31).

How frequently this passage is quoted by Christians with Israel omitted.

Why is this? Many of these Jewish believers were models for bearing persecution, and for devoted activity in the service of Christ, for they departed from the Jewish council, **“rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ”** (Ch. 5:41, 42).

And still the number of the disciples was multiplying. **“And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith!”** (Ch. 6:7)

Nothing could be more satisfactory than the progress of the Gospel among the Jews of Jerusalem during the period of about twelve months after Pentecost—34 A.D. Stephen bears his glorious testimony for Christ in Jerusalem, which costs him his life. **“And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles”** (Ch. 8:1).

“Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word. Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did . . . and there was great joy in that city” (Acts 8:4, 8).

Thousands of Jerusalem believers were now driven by persecution out of their comfortable quarters, when the needs of others, the command of Christ, and the impulse of His love, should have constrained them voluntarily to go forth.

Christ’s command was clear enough—Jerusalem, all Judea, Samaria, then, uttermost part of the earth. Jerusalem and Judea have had their turn, and now Samaria gets her turn and blessing also, in the mission of Philip and its glorious results.

Some features of this persecution and its results are deserving of special notice. They were all scattered *except the Apostles*. The foremost and most able men remained at home. Have we no repetition of this in modern days?

Another feature was that they were scattered only throughout the regions of *Judea* and *Samaria*. They remained still in the land for some time.

And another feature was that when they went to places outside Palestine, they preached only to Jews. **“Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only . . . And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord”** (Ch. 11:19-21).

Let us carefully keep along the line of plan and blessing.

Christ's command is—*Jerusalem, all Judea, Samaria, and the uttermost part of the earth*. With marvellous rapidity and results the Gospel has been preached in Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria; and now multitudes of these disciples are scattered by persecution over Judea and Samaria, and then outside their land, though still preaching only to Jews.

Now that the blessings of the Gospel are carried to others, though the messengers have been thrust out by persecution, the Church has peace and prosperity at home.

“Then had the churches rest throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied” (Acts 9:31).

A New Departure

Down to the time of Stephen's martyrdom, and the fiery persecution which followed, Jews were the only converts and converted Jews were the only preachers; and although that persecution sent converts probably by thousands out of Jerusalem over all Judea and Samaria, and even to Cyprus and other places, preaching the Gospel everywhere; yet nothing is clearer than that the work of evangelization was exclusively carried on amongst Jews and Samaritans.

It would seem that the apostles thought that by **“the uttermost part of the earth;”** our blessed Lord meant only the Jews scattered among the Gentiles. This error, if held, must be corrected, and the Gentiles must now have the Gospel as well as the Jews—Mark—*not instead of the Jews*. With the new departure the Lord prepares a new instrument. He not only uses the persecution for spreading the Gospel, but He now lays hold of the leading persecutor to use him in spreading the Gospel far and wide amongst both Jews and Gentiles. Of this Saul of Tarsus, this very religious but persecuting Jew, the Lord said to Ananias, **“He is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear My name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel”** (Ch. 9:15).

Immediately after this marvellous conversion of the persecutor and the Divine intimation of his special mission we have another important event in the interest of the Gentiles.

An angel of God speaks to Cornelius at Caesarea, and tells him to send over to Joppa for Peter, the converted Jew. The next morning they depart. While on their way to Joppa, Peter himself has a remarkable vision about noon, on the top of the house where he lodged. This vision was the means of removing much of his national and natural prejudice.

On the following morning he accompanies the messengers to Caesarea, is warmly received by Cornelius, and opens his message by designating the Gospel as the word which God **“sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all);”** and closes his address by announcing **“that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins . . . while Peter yet spake these words . . . every one that believeth,”** &c,—

“The Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed—Jewish believers—were amazed . . . because that on the Gentiles *also* was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost” (Acts 10:36, 43-45).

This startling news came to the ears of the apostles and other Jewish believers, **“And the apostles and brethren that were in Judaea heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God”** (Ch. 11:1).

The marvel eighteen centuries ago was not that Jews could be, and were converted, by thousands upon thousands; but the amazement of Jewish believers—accustomed to the marvellous and miraculous—was that Gentiles were capable of conversion. Gentile Christians have less excuse for their unbelief as to Jewish conversions, than Christian Jews had for their unbelief as to Gentile conversions. The Jews had only seen a few proselytes to the synagogue, but had seen no Holy Ghost conversions among the Gentiles; whilst the believing Gentiles have known all along that this present dispensation was opened by the conversion of thousands of Jews.

When Peter reached Jerusalem he was called to account for fraternizing with Gentiles and eating with them. He tells the whole story with childlike simplicity, and then makes his appeal to his believing Jewish brethren— **“Forasmuch then as God gave *them* (the Gentiles) the like gift as he did unto *us* (Jews), who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God? When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life”** (Acts 11:17, 18).

This word *also* is applied several times to believing Gentiles, which implies that they were *added* to believing Jews, and *with* them were to become *partakers* of all spiritual blessings in Christ on common terms.

It was never the mind of the Lord that there should be a *Gentile Church* to the exclusion of the Jew. Though Peter was honored with a special vision from heaven which led him to offer salvation to **“every one that believeth,”** and to witness the first Gentile conversions, his old Jewish prejudice survives, and he is found unequal to his grand opportunity. He remains an Apostle to the Jews.

Paul testifies concerning Peter— **“But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation. But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?”** (Galatians 2:11-14).

Though Paul had to reprove Peter for his weakness, his timidity, his inconsistency, and for the evil influence of his example, he bears willing testimony to Peter’s usefulness in preaching the Gospel to the Jews, by saying, **“For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles.”**

“And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision” (ch. 2:8, 9).

This is wonderfully instructive. Peter is honored in bringing the first Gentile converts to Christ, but is disapproved for further work in that direction and remains a Missionary to the Jews. The regular apostles seem to have got into a groove of thought and work which rendered them unequal to the new departure in the missionary enterprise. Saul of Tarsus—the religious, educated, energetic, earnest, powerful-minded, strong-willed Jew was chosen by the Lord to take the lead in mission work among the Gentiles, and also to unfold the mystery of the present elective dispensation.

As a man, as a Jew, as a Christian, and as an apostle, this Paul was perhaps the most remarkable man of any age or nation, excepting only the Lord Jesus Himself.

Paul was honored to receive a revelation respecting several mysteries—as

- **“The mystery of iniquity”;**
- The mystery of the rapture of living saints;
- The mystery of the Church, composed of individual believing Jews and Gentiles, as the purpose of this dispensation;
- The mystery of the partial blindness of Israel.

These last two mysteries have been referred to in a former chapter, so we may now pass on to remark that Paul is the chosen leader in the new departure. With a full knowledge of the elective character of the present dispensation, he manifests the most devoted and self-denying zeal in the work of evangelization. He knows, to use a familiar illustration, that the Jewish nation as such is shunted to a siding until the times of the Gentiles run out, to allow the express train to pass, stopping here and there to pick up the Church, and then the Jewish nation will take her place on the main line of the Divine plan, stop at all stations and pick up the world.

He who expects the world to be converted during this dispensation, and before our Lord’s return, expects what the Word of God nowhere warrants, and consequently is doomed to disappointment and discouragement. Besides, as men become converted, they become part of the Church, so that the world and the Church would become one—the world the Church, and the Church the world. But although the world is not to be converted in this dispensation, it is to be evangelized.

“Preach the Gospel to every creature” is as binding on the Church as though this were to effect the world’s conversion. It is the plain duty of all true Christians to take their share in reaching the world—by personal service in the Mission field, by prayer, or by money help; in some cases in all three forms.

The question for the Church is—what is the best and quickest way to evangelize the world? Let us keep as close as possible to the apostolic mode, in other words, let us keep as close as possible to the directions of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself whilst still here, and then follow as closely the mind of the Holy Spirit as expressed after the Lord’s personal departure.

Simple obedience is the first condition of blessing and success.

- Wait till sent.
- Wait till filled with power.
- Then go where sent by the Master, and do as told.

The Lord said to His disciples, “**Ye shall be witnesses unto Me.**” They were ready. The Lord said “**Tarry ye in the city, until ye be endued with power from on high.**” They did so. The Lord said witness to Me “**in Jerusalem, in all Judea, in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth**” (Acts 1:8).

We have had obedience continued, as far as Jerusalem, all Judea, and Samaria were concerned.

The blessing in the line of obedience was wonderful. Thousands upon thousands of Jews and Samaritans converted. Now we have to do with “**the uttermost part of the earth.**” We have seen that it required a bitter persecution of the Church to get the disciples to this part of their mission; and even when driven out, the Apostles remained behind: and although the dispersed ones “**went every where preaching the Word,**” they preached “**the word to none but unto the Jews only.**”

We have seen that a new departure was needed, and with the new departure, a new man, a new Apostle. The leader in the persecution that scattered the disciples was the Lord Jesus Christ’s choice as leader in this new departure.

On this apostle of the Gentiles was conferred also the honor of solving Jewish difficulties by explaining the character and purpose of this dispensation.

Elective of individuals its character, and the gathering of the Church its purpose, it will be wise as well as instructive to notice here an important fact. Paul knew the character of this dispensation. He knew the conversion of nations as such—first Israel and then the Gentiles — awaited the return of the Lord, and yet his zeal in evangelizing never flagged. He was perhaps the most faithful, laborious, energetic, persevering and successful evangelist that ever lived. We shall do well to catch his spirit, and to watch and imitate his course of conduct.

Paul always went first to the Jew

This is a simple fact. It is not a mere opinion.

Notice again the very words of the Lord to Ananias at Damascus respecting Paul, “**he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel**” (Acts 9:15)

He begins preaching in Damascus. To whom “**straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God,**” and that he “**confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ**” (Ch. 9:20, 22).

He leaves Damascus for Jerusalem, where he is found preaching **“boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed against the Grecians”** (Ch. 9:28, 29).

His life is in danger. The brethren bring him down to Caesarea, and send him on to Tarsus. Acts 11:26, &c. Barnabas afterwards leaves Jerusalem for Antioch, and then goes on to Tarsus seeking Saul, finds him, brings him back to Antioch where they remained a whole year, and were then sent to Judea with relief for their poor brethren. Acts 11:22-30.

Paul and Barnabas, having fulfilled their ministry, returned from Jerusalem to Antioch bringing John Mark with them.

“As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus. And when they were at Salamis, they preached the word of God in the *synagogues of the Jews*” (Acts 13:2-5).

John Mark is with them. They go to Paphos at the opposite end of the island of Cyprus. Then **“Paul and his company loosed from Paphos, they came to Perga in Pamphylia: and John departing from them returned to Jerusalem”** (Ch. 13:13).

Now Paul and Barnabas pass through Perga to Antioch in the extreme north of Pisidia.

The first thing we read of them after their arrival is that **“they went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and sat down. And after the reading of the law and the prophets—the appointed portions for the day—the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them, saying, Ye men and Brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on. And Paul stood up, and beckoning with his hand, said”** (Ch. 13:14-16)—here follows a most remarkable discourse from this most remarkable man.

Christ is beautifully linked to Old Testament history and promise, and forgiveness of sins preached through faith in Him.

“And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next sabbath. Now when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas: who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God. And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God. But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming. Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but *seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth”* (Acts 13:42, 47).

These Jews stirred up a persecution against the apostles who shook off the dust of their feet and left them.

We have quoted this passage at considerable length because of its great importance, and because such fearful mistakes have been made as to its meaning. Again and again in conversation among Christians, and even in sermons, have we heard that Paul turned from the Jews and went to the Gentiles, inferring that he had now done with the Jews who were abandoned for their rejection of the Gospel and for their blasphemy. The simple truth is that Paul and Barnabas turned only from those Jews who contradicted and blasphemed at Antioch in Pisidia; and turned only to those Gentiles who were gathered there at the Jews' synagogue. Neither the Jews nor the Gentiles were in a representative capacity. They each represented only themselves, just as any other blasphemers would in any other part of the world. Had those blasphemers represented the Jewish people in general, of course the apostles would have left the Jews altogether; but they did not, for at the next place they visited—Iconium—**“they went both together into the synagogue of the Jews, and so spake, that a great multitude both of the Jews and also of the Greeks believed”** (Ch. 14:1).

It is important to notice that at Antioch the Apostles admitted **“it was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you.”** Why was it necessary? On two grounds.

- First, it was God's order.
- Second, because, whilst the same Saviour, the same salvation, and on the same terms, would do for both, the same sermon would not.

When Paul preached to the Gentiles, he urged them to turn from dumb idols to serve the living and true God; but when he preached to Jews, he showed from the Hebrew Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ. If both Jews and Gentiles—heathen and Mohammedan—are to have the Gospel preached to them to-day, it must be first to the one or the other, for the same reasons hold good to-day as 1800 years ago.

If necessary to preach to Jews first then, and it was, why not now? The Gentile heathen are in the same state now as then. The Jews are also in the same state now as then, and they both stand in the same relationship to each other.

Confirmatory Evidence

The opening of the 17th chapter of the Acts should be carefully read. There we find that **“first to the Jew”** was the apostles' regular custom.

“Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they”—now Paul and Silas—**“came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews: And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures, Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom,”** said he, **“I preach unto you, is Christ. And some of them believed”** (Acts 17:1-4).

Paul and Silas come next to Berea, and **“went into the synagogue of the Jews.”** These Jews, we are told, **“more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so. Many of them therefore believed”** (Acts 17:12).

They were intelligent believers. They knew *what* they believed, in *whom* they believed, and *why* they believed; and would thus be firm believers, and the more likely to be successful preachers to others.

Paul goes on to Athens, leaving Silas and Timothy behind at Berea. **“Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry. Therefore disputed he in the synagogue with the Jews”** (Ch. 17:16, 17).

Paul had got his commission to preach to the Gentiles. He had arrived at one of the finest fields for work. He had preparation for his work by the stirring of his spirit, and still he went to the Jews. Why? Surely he was guided by the same Holy Ghost who separated him and sent him. This is a sufficient answer. But another reason is suggested in addition. He seems to say, “I have Jewish brethren here who believe the Old Testament Scriptures, who are waiting for the Messiah: why should I not seek their conversion, and leave them to evangelize the Gentiles, whilst I prosecute my mission in other places.”

“Therefore disputed he in the synagogue with the Jews . . . After these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth . . . And he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and Greeks” (Ch. 18:1, 4).

“And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ. And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook his raiment, and said unto them, Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles” (Acts 18:5, 6).

Here again many Christians have thought and said that Paul here leaves the Jews altogether as abandoned of God for their blasphemy.

Certainly not. He does not even turn his back on all the Jews at Corinth, where this occurred. Follow him. **“And he departed thence, and entered into a certain man's house, named Justus, one that worshipped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue. And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house”** (Ch. 18:7, 8).

The Gentiles also got a blessing, for **“many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized.”**

Paul stayed there a year and a half, for the Lord told him in a vision that He had much people in that city. Paul set sail for Syria, calling at Ephesus on his way. Here he **“entered into the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews”** (Ch. 18:19).

He refused, though pressed, to stay longer at that time, but promised **“if God will”** to return to them. Aquila and Priscilla had accompanied Paul from Corinth to Ephesus, but Paul left them at Ephesus, where they proved to be a great help to Apollos in preaching to the Jews till Paul’s return from Syria by way of Antioch, Galatia, and Phrygia. When Paul reached Ephesus on his return, Apollos had already gone to Corinth, where he preached to the Jews with convincing power. Paul at Ephesus again **“went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God”** (Ch. 19:8).

Gentiles received large blessing in the observance of this order, **“first to the Jew.”** **“Many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized,”** and the further striking statement **“that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks”** (Acts 19:10).

Paul’s influence on the worship of Diana was truly wonderful, even allowing that Demetrius had greatly exaggerated that influence when he said, **“Ye see and hear, that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they be no gods, which are made with hands”** (Ch. 19:26).

There was amazing stir and excitement. Paul’s friends begged him not to venture into the theatre. Whilst Paul is being held back, another Jew, Alexander, was pushed forward, and wished to speak. **“But when they knew that he was a Jew, all with one voice about the space of two hours cried out, Great is Diana of the Ephesians”** (Ch. 19:34).

It would seem that the idolatrous systems of the world would tremble and fall before the preaching of Jews filled with the Holy Ghost. These idolaters seemed shrewd enough to infer that it was no use defending by fair argument their worship of idols in the presence of Jews; their only course was to shout their religion up, and to shout the Jews down.

Some time after this uproar and excitement at Ephesus, Paul having visited several other places called at Miletus on his way to Jerusalem to keep Pentecost: and from Miletus he sent for the elders of the Church at Ephesus, to whom he gives one of the most touching and beautiful addresses on record, and in which he testified that he had preached **“both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ”** (Ch. 20:21).

This model missionary, whose movements appear to have been directed by the Holy Spirit, uniformly presents the Gospel, **“to the Jew first”** and then to the Gentile. As long as this course was observed, both Jews and Gentiles got large blessing.

Paul reaches Jerusalem, and receives a hearty welcome from the brethren—believing Jews. The next day he calls on James, when **“all the elders were present, And when he had saluted them, he declared particularly what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry. And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord”** (Acts 21:19, 20), and then bore their testimony to the fact that among the Jews there were *myriads of believers*, though still zealous for the law.

His bitter persecution in Jerusalem issues in his being sent a prisoner to Rome. When he had been in Rome three days, **“Paul called the chief of the Jews together”** (Ch. 28:17).

They fixed a day for another visit, and then **“came many to him into his lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening. And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not”** (Ch. 28:23, 24).

In evangelistic work we have never had other results among the Gentiles for these eighteen hundred years—some believing and some disbelieving. The unbelief and blasphemy of *some* Jews is no more a reason for turning from *all* Jews, than the unbelief and blasphemy of some Gentiles is a reason for turning from all the Gentiles.

Paul here, at the close of the Acts, quotes Isaiah, 6th chapter, as fulfilled in the case of the opposing and unbelieving Jews at Rome, which simply illustrates the *partial* blindness which has happened to Israel during this present dispensation. He then assures them that their individual unbelief will not discredit the Gospel, but **“that this salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles: and that they will hear it.”**

God’s order is **“to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile.”** This order observed throughout this dispensation will obey Divine precept, and follow apostolic precedent, and will, in the best and quickest manner, gather the Church and hasten the Lord’s return.

*Inferences drawn by Christians from the following Scripture commands:
“Beginning at Jerusalem” and “To the Jew first.”*

Some believing that the two have one and the same meaning, and that **“to the Jew first”** is still in force, infer that **“beginning at Jerusalem”** means going first to the Jews with the Gospel in every land and in every age. Others, believing also that the two have one meaning, and that **“beginning at Jerusalem”** means only starting from that city in preaching the Gospel 1800 years ago, infer that **“to the Jew first”** was fulfilled and done with in apostolic times.

Both are partly right and partly wrong. **“Beginning at Jerusalem”** is to be taken in its plain, literal, and obvious meaning, as beginning in that city. This was fulfilled and done with in the opening of this dispensation. The spirit of the command remains as—begin *where you are*; begin at *home*. If **“beginning at Jerusalem”** were *literally* in force to-day every evangelist must commence his mission from the city Jerusalem. This is impracticable, if not impossible. But **“first to the Jew”** is a principle of order, commanded by the Holy Spirit, observed by the apostles, even by the apostle to the Gentiles, and which has never been cancelled or reversed.

Confirmed by the Epistle to the Romans

Paul’s love to his Jewish brethren was truly wonderful. His heart’s desire and prayer to God was for their salvation; indeed, his love has been expressed in language so strong that divines for ages have been perplexed with its meaning.

“That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh” (Romans 9:2, 3).

Paul was a patriot, no doubt; but we cannot adequately account for these strong expressions on the ground of patriotism. He had a deeper insight into the Divine plan and the manner of its accomplishment than perhaps any other man. This insight was given him by the Holy Spirit; why not then readily admit that his course of conduct was an example for all evangelists during the current dispensation, and not simply patriotic, local, or temporary?

The permanency of the order, **“to the Jew first,”** is confirmed by Romans 1:16:— **“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.”** And again in chapter 2:9-11— **“Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: For there is no respect of persons with God.”**

It seems to be a dangerous tampering with Scripture to say that this order was temporary, and confined to apostolic times. The Epistle was written nearly thirty years after the opening of the dispensation, and relates to doctrine and practice affecting the entire dispensation, and reaching down to the Lord’s return at its close for the conversion of the Jewish nation—chap. 11:25, 26.

Order not Pre-Eminence

“To the Jew first” is simply a matter of order, not preeminence. It must be understood as perfectly harmonizing with **“no difference between the Jew and the Greek,”** and **“no respect of persons with God.”** Israel is God’s firstborn among the family of nations, and the elder brother of the Gentiles. God said to Moses, **“Thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the Lord, Israel is my son, my firstborn”** (Exodus 4:22). The firstborn has had greater privileges than the Gentiles, and consequently higher responsibilities. Responsibility is measured by privilege, and chastisement by privilege abused.

In the revealed purpose of God the firstborn has responsibilities in the interest of his younger brothers—the Gentiles—of which he cannot divest himself. If the Jews fail, they get **“tribulation and anguish”** first. None seem unwilling to let them have *priority* in chastisement for disobedience—a priority which shall last through the present dispensation. Why should a different meaning and application be given to that *priority* in relation to blessing?

The chastisement *first* to the Jew, is not only punishment for privilege abused, but is intended as a warning to Gentiles, **“Be not highminded, but fear”** (Romans 11:20). The blessing given **“first to the Jew”** discharges a heavy debt of justice for past wrongs inflicted on him by unrelenting persecution for ages, also a heavy debt of gratitude for priceless blessing received through him, and at the same time secures in him when blessed, a channel and instrument for blessing the world.

Not a Gentile Dispensation

How commonly one hears this dispensation spoken of as a Gentile dispensation. There is not a single passage of Scripture to favor this designation. That the Gentiles have kept the blessings of the Gospel to themselves for many centuries is quite true, but that has been more to their reproach and loss, than to their honor and blessing.

The Gospel of Christ was established in the affections of tens of thousands of Jews before Gentiles were at all admitted to its privileges and blessings. The Jewish wall was broken down not that the Jews might be driven out from Gospel blessings, but that the Gentiles might share those blessings with *Jews* on common terms.

The Gentiles were to be “fellow-heirs, fellow-members of the body, and fellow-partakers of the promise.” On this point nothing can be clearer than the inspired statement of Paul in Romans 11:17, 18. **“And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree. Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee”**

Let us carefully notice some points in this passage.

- *Some* of the branches broken off—*not all*.
- Gentile wild olives grafted in among Jewish natural branches—Jewish believers in Christ; not *instead* of even the broken off branches.
- Though broken off for unbelief, God says, **“And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graff them in again”** (Romans 11:23).

In the mean time, during the present dispensation, it is the clearly expressed will of God that believing Gentiles should be *partakers*—not monopolizers, partakers only—with believing Jews, of the root of the fatness of the olive tree. Can any honest mind persuade itself that the thought, feeling, and effort of the Christian Church have been, or are now, in harmony with God’s mind as here expressed toward the Jew? And if not, why not?

Some Christians appear to think they have effectually silenced all who would preach the Gospel to the Jew at all— as a Jew—whether put first or last, by quoting the words, **“In Christ Jesus there is neither Jew nor Greek.”**

We answer, Paul preached to the Jews as Jews and to them first; and further, he says, **“to the Jew I became a Jew that I might gain the Jews.”**

The Scriptures speak of **“the Jews, the Gentiles, and the Church of God.”** But the Jews and Gentiles in this passage are *out of Christ*; and the *Church of God* is *in Christ*. In Christ, Jews, and Gentiles are both one, but out of Christ they are not both one, and our preaching is to Jews *out of Christ*. It therefore, is thoughtless if not foolish to quote such a passage against preaching Christ to the Jews as Jews.

Besides, where it is said “there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female,” it does not mean that these sexual, social, and national distinctions are *destroyed*, but simply ignored. None are saved *because* they are Jews or Greeks, or *because* they are masters or servants, or *because* they are males or females; but because they are sinners willing to comply with God’s terms of salvation.

We might urge the priority of the Jewish claim on Christian love and effort on the ground of the wrongs inflicted on the Jews for ages by so-called Christians. The cruelties and idolatries of a spurious Christianity have hardened the hearts and intensified the prejudices of millions of Jews. Their teeth have been drawn and their eyes scooped out, by so-called Christians, to get at the Jews’ money. They have been hunted like foxes, cursed as dogs, plundered as bees, treated by the licentious as beasts, and banished from every Christian country under heaven. Surely we might seek by active kindness, not only to atone for ages of wrongdoing, but even to win numbers of them to the faith of the Gospel. Besides, has not God said to converted Gentiles, **“For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief: Even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy”** (Romans 11:30, 31).

It is not *by your cruelty*; it is not *by your neglect*; but by the *mercy shown to you*, they also may *now* obtain mercy. Has the mercy shown to us had any saving effect on our Jewish brethren? Cruelty has hardened, love will soften.

We might urge the priority of the Jewish claim on the ground of *gratitude* for the priceless blessings we have received through the Jews.

- The Bible was written and preserved by Jews,
- The Saviour of the world was a Jew.
- The first thousands of converts were Jews.
- And the first missionaries to us Gentiles were Jews.

I was dining one day in the suburbs of the city of York. My host said, “I have just had a call at my business place in the city from the son of an eminent divine.”

I replied, “I have heard of him, but have never seen him. He is a sad grief to his family, having behaved ill to his wife and left her, and has become a sort of vagabond.”

“True,” said my host. “Why did he call on you.”

“To ask for help.”

“Did you give him anything.”

“Yes, I gave him a sovereign.”

“Why so much.”

“His excellent father has frequently been my guest, and I never heard him preach or pray but I was blessed under his ministry, and was sorry to see the son of so good a man in such a plight, so gave him a sovereign, not for his own, but for his father’s sake.” A noble act, prompted by a worthy motive!

We put in a plea for similar kindness on similar grounds on behalf of ten or twelve millions of Abraham’s seed. Sinners they are—great sinners—but God says they are still “**beloved for the fathers’ sake**” (Romans 11:28).

And if God can afford to love them while still enemies to the Gospel, surely we can love them too.

On the ground of *justice* for past wrongs; on the ground of *gratitude* for priceless blessings; but above all, from love to Him who prayed, “Father, forgive them, they know not what they do;” and who is now “**exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins**” we urge “**first to the Jew.**”

Surely the Christian’s regard for divine command, and for apostolic example should settle this matter once for all, and the Jew in modern missions should resume the place he occupied at the opening of this dispensation, and with so much blessing to his own people and to the Gentiles.

In the family of nations Israel is God’s *firstborn*.

- God said to Moses, “**Thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, thus saith the Lord, Israel is my son, even my firstborn**” (Exodus 4:22).

- According to Deuteronomy 21:15-17, in the distribution of a father’s property among his children, “**a double portion**” was the right of the firstborn.

Have we never known the firstborn of a family become a sort of second husband to a widowed mother, and a sort of second father to his younger brothers and sisters? Responsibility is measured by position and privilege, hence the principle of the “**double**” in God’s dealings with Israel. Israel has been elected to position and privilege with corresponding responsibilities towards the whole Gentile world, to whom he is the destined channel and instrument of blessing. In disobedience Israel is visited with “**tribulation and anguish**” and receives at “**the Lord’s hand double for all her sins**” (Isaiah 40:2).

But on their national conversion and fulfillment of their divine mission, God says to them “**For your shame ye shall have double . . . in their land they shall possess the double: everlasting joy shall be unto them**” (Ch. 61:7).

“**To the Jew first,**” as an individual, now; “**and also to the Gentile;**” then the Jewish nation first on the return of the Lord and the opening of the millennium; and then the blessing of all nations through restored and saved Israel. This is God’s revealed arrangement, and which has never been cancelled or reversed.

Some Christians object that if the Jews as a nation are not to be converted till the Lord's return, why trouble about the conversion of Jews now? But the very same objection might be urged against seeking the conversion of Gentiles now, for the Gentiles as nations are not to be blessed till after the Lord's return, and not till after the restoration and conversion of Israel.

It is as binding on the Church now to preach the Gospel to the Jew for the conversion of "**the remnant according to the election of grace**," as it is binding on the Church now to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles "**to take out of them a people for His name**." An election of individuals now—Jews and Gentiles—to form a new body—the Bride of Christ; then the blessing of the nations in millennial times, after the return of the Lord.

It has been asked, and not unnaturally, if this order be in force to-day, how is it to be practically applied? Is the Church of Christ to abandon her missionary work among the Gentiles, and turn their attention exclusively to the Jews? No, certainly not. That would be as unscriptural as preaching the Gospel exclusively to the Gentiles. Let the mind of the Church be thoroughly surrendered to God's Word— "**To the Jew first, and also to the Gentile**." We would have prayers, missionaries and contributions increased a thousand-fold on behalf of missions to the Gentiles, rather than diminished in the smallest degree. One should be done, and the other not left undone.

All that need be done to meet the requirements of Scripture in letter and in spirit, in sending the Gospel "**to the uttermost part of the earth**" is this: wherever Jews are found in towns and cities to which missionaries are sent, let the apostolic order be observed, "**To the Jew first, and also to the Gentile**." The experiment has been made already, and with marvellous results, in the opening of the current dispensation. We see no reason why similar results should not follow a return to the apostolic order.

*Why was the Order "**First to the Jew**"*

not only reversed but cancelled altogether by the Christian Church 1800 years ago?

We can account for the changed attitude of the Church toward the Jew in the following way: when Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed in A.D. 70 by Titus, and the Jews were driven out of their land, the Church not unnaturally, though erroneously, drew the inference that the Jews were abandoned by God, thus mixing up spiritual with national interests, which led to the neglect of the Jew and then to his bitter persecution, and the result was—the dark ages.

If before the destruction of Jerusalem, the apostles went always first to the Jews in Gentile lands, and when there were comparatively few, the inducement to observe this order since the last dispersion is much strengthened—as much as the number of Jews is greater.

A Century of Protestant Missions

This is the title of a pamphlet bristling with the most startling facts, written by James Johnston, and published by Nisbet and Co.

Amongst these facts we have the following: that “the heathen and Mohammedan population of the world is more by 200,000,000 than it was one hundred years ago; while the converts and their families do not amount to 3,000,000.” The actual increase of population, Mr. Johnston says, “is much more than the 200,000,000.” He says further, “We rejoice in the work accomplished by modern Christian missions, while we mourn over the sad fact that the increase of the heathen is numerically *more than seventy times* greater than that of the converts during the century of missions.” These are appalling facts. He also states another fact equally startling: “That the great heathen and Mohammedan systems of religion are not only increasing their adherents by the ordinary birthrate, but are yearly making far more converts than our Christian missions.” Another statement should be noticed with the above: “That Protestant missions have, in a hundred years, accomplished as much as could reasonably be expected, from the methods employed, and the means placed at the disposal of the societies conducting them.”

Statement No. 1. That the rate of increase of population among the heathen and Mohammedans during the last hundred years has been more than 200,000,000, that is, seventy times as many as the number of nominal Christians made from the same peoples during the same 100 years.

Statement No. 2. In addition to the increase among the heathen and Mohammedans by birth-rate, they are yearly making far more converts than all Christian missions.

Statement No. 3. That as much as could reasonably be expected has been accomplished during the last hundred years by Protestant missions, considering the methods *employed* and the means afforded.

If these statements are true—and we cannot gainsay them, but we rather thank the author of the pamphlet for his array of facts, his reasons, and his inferences—if, at nearly the end of the nineteenth century of the Christian era, we have got no further in the evangelization of the world than the above statements assert, has not the time come for a thorough re-examination of methods and means adopted to secure the great end contemplated?

It is asked, have you anything to suggest?

Let me first state a few facts.

1. The Jews are in all lands.
2. They have access to all people.
3. They are familiar with the languages, manners and customs of all nations.
4. They have physical constitutions acclimatized to all countries.
5. They admit, as inspired of God, three-fourths of our Bible.
6. The remaining one-fourth—called the New Testament—rests upon the foundation of the Old Testament, and renders it a complete revelation.
7. They are waiting for a Messiah according to the Old Testament predictions, and that Messiah can be proved to be the Jesus of the New.

They have been made, by Divine grace, the most wonderful men of God, both in Old and New Testament times, the world has ever seen. We have the same material to-day, and the same Holy Ghost power to appropriate it. All the essential features of the Jews —mental and physical—are the same to-day as when Moses brought them out of Egypt.

God overruled the captivity in Babylon, which was local and temporary, for blessing to the idolatrous nation that took the Jews captive. A decree was issued by the Government that not a word must be spoken against the God of Daniel.

God has already overruled the national “**fall**” and the national “**casting away**” of the Jews for blessing to the Gentiles on a large though limited scale; are we not encouraged by Scripture to hope for a larger blessing to the Gentiles as the result of direct effort on the part of the Jews in evangelizing the Gentiles.

“Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness?”

And then Paul glories in being “**an Apostle of the Gentiles.**” On what ground. “**If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them.**”

Why so anxious to save some Jews.” **For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead”?** (Romans 11:12-15).

Paul gloried in preaching to Gentiles, in the hope of exciting jealousy in the Jews, which should result in the salvation of some who might prove instruments of life to spiritually dead Gentiles.

Charles Wesley sings,

The world shall their reception find,
Life from the dead for all mankind.

We know this will be fully realized in millennial times, but may we not hope for a precious installment of blessing even now *if* we work on the line of these truths?

We cannot find words in which adequately to praise the Lord for the noble army of missionaries and martyrs furnished by the Church—Episcopalians, Methodists, Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Baptists, and others—during the last hundred years; but is it not open to question as to whether the sacrifice of health and life was not larger than was necessary?

Many have fallen into an early grave under the influence of an unfriendly climate. Many having spent years in acquiring language, have returned home in middle life, with a shattered constitution, or on account of the broken health of the wife. We profoundly honor the godly men and women who were willing to lay down their lives for Christ, but we cannot praise the Christian Church for her culpable neglect of the Jew as a world evangelizer.

As a sample of what we may expect from converted Jews as evangelists, take the case of the late Isidore Loewenthal. He was a missionary of the Free Church of Scotland out in India. He died at 33 years of age by the hand of the murderer. He had not only acquired a large library rich in biblical and Hindu lore, but learned the Afghan tongue; and into the difficult Pushtoo he translated the New Testament, and preached daily in the bazaars of India as recreation from the severer studies of his life. He was the first European who preached in the Khyber Pass. He was exceedingly useful to the Indian Government in the time of the mutiny, so much so, that it was said of him, if he had not been a missionary he might have been a statesman; and that in his death India had lost one of the greatest minds that ever blest India.

Now, who was this man? Fourteen years before his death, at the age of 18 or 19, he was a Jewish peddler, in the streets of New Jersey, America.

In the face of the Scriptures and facts about the Jews, and the state and needs of the world, is it out of place to call the attention of the entire Christian Church to a principle of Divine authority, which though obsolete in practice is still unrepealed— **“To the Jew first, and also to the Gentile”**?

I have faithfully delivered my testimony whatever be its destiny; and I now affectionately and earnestly implore all true Christians to give thoughtful, prayerful, unbiased attention to the subject of Jewish evangelization.

In the conversion of Jews we annihilate the most powerful opposition to the Gospel that exists, and secure the ablest auxiliaries in evangelizing the Gentiles.

Let us then, for the sake of the Jews, who gave us the Gospel, and who need it themselves; and beyond this, for the sake of the Gentiles, to whom the Jews have access everywhere; but above all, for Christ's sake, let us obey the Scripture precept, and follow apostolic precedent, **“To the Jew first, and also to the Gentile”** (Romans 2:10).

~ end of chapter 9 ~

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“ISRAEL MY GLORY”

Israel’s Mission, and Missions to Israel

by

John Wilkinson

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CHAPTER TEN

THE MISTAKES OF MANY CHRISTIANS CONCERNING JEWS STATED AND CORRECTED

PREJUDICE is blinding. We readily assent to this in the case of the Jew. The Jew has been, and to a large extent is still, prejudiced against Christ and Christianity, and that prejudice blinds. Many Christians are still prejudiced against the Jews and are to the same extent blinded. Hence, in the case of the Jew, the Scriptures which relate to the Messiahship of Jesus are misinterpreted under the blindness of prejudice; and in the case of the Christian, the Scriptures which relate to the Jew are misinterpreted under the same blinding influence.

It is a mistake to suppose that *national rejection*, which is but *temporary*, and which affects necessarily only *temporal interests*, has imperiled individual salvation. This point has been referred to at length in our third chapter, so needs no more than a passing remark here. Paul, by the Holy Ghost, says, distinctly “**Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin**” (Romans 11:1).

This is confirmed by the plain statement in Romans 10:12-15, which has been already noticed, that with God “**there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek,**” &c. And further confirmed by Romans 1:16, where the Gospel is declared to be “**the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first.**”

Then if the national rejection of the Jew has not imperiled his individual salvation, it has always been, and is now, the imperative duty of the Christian Church to preach to him the Gospel. Had she done so from apostolic times, she might have witnessed apostolic results.

Further, it is a mistake to suppose that the guilt incurred in the crucifixion of Jesus hinders Jewish conversion. How frequently have hard thoughts been suggested, and hard words uttered by even Christian ministers and commentators when quoting the imprecation: “**His blood be on us, and on our children**” (Matthew 27:25).

Now we readily admit that judgment came on the *nation* as the result of rejecting Jesus as the Messiah; and it must be admitted further that individual Jews rejecting Jesus as Saviour necessarily died in their sins, for Jesus said, “**If ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins.**”

And Jesus further said to the **“Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! . . . Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers . . . that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zachariah, son of Barachias . . . Verily, I say unto you, all these things shall come upon this generation”** (Ch. 23:29, 36).

Now it must be admitted from the above passages, that the rejection and crucifixion of Jesus not only affected the national and temporal interests of the Jews, turning the nation out of Palestine and scattering them among the Gentiles during **“the times of the Gentiles,”** but that the deliberate rejection of Jesus as Saviour affected the spiritual and eternal interests of multitudes of individual Jews then as the same conduct in Jews and Gentiles does now. But when we consider that tens of thousands of Jews of that same generation were truly converted after the rejection and crucifixion of Jesus, we are justified in maintaining, that the spiritual and eternal interests of the people as a whole were not unfavorably affected by the people’s imprecation, **“His blood be on us, and: on our children.”**

In the first place it was a *wicked prayer* offered by *wicked men*.

What does God say of such prayers. **“The desire of the wicked shall perish.” “The prayer of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord.”** Admitting, however, that for purposes of retribution God does permit imprecations to fall on the heads of the wicked themselves, He does not permit the wicked to dispose of the spiritual and eternal interests of their children. If imprecations on others were to be answered, the Romanists would have made short work of the whole Protestant world before now; and even drunkards would barter the eternal interests of their children for the intoxicating cup.

How few care to inquire into the amount of guilt incurred by the Jews in crucifying the Lord Jesus. They crucified knowingly a *man*. They crucified knowingly an *innocent* man, for our Lord could challenge the nation: **“Which of you convinceth me of sin.”** They crucified knowingly, not only a man, an innocent man, but also a Divine Messenger, as His works testified. But they did not crucify knowingly **“the Lord of Glory,”** for we are distinctly told by Paul that **“We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery . . . Which none of the princes of this world knew; for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory”** (I Corinthians 2:8).

Peter also, addressing the Jews in Solomon’s porch of the Temple, says, **“And now, brethren, I wot (know) that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers”** (Acts 3:17).

Paul bears similar testimony in his sermon to the Jews at Antioch in Pisidia: **“For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning Him”** (Acts 13:27).

It must also be remembered that our Lord’s prayer on the Cross for His crucifiers was based on their ignorance of what they were doing: **“Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do”** (Luke 23:34).

Now this was a definite prayer of our Blessed Lord to His Father on behalf of His murderers, and either was answered, or it was not. If not answered, the Father did not hear Him always; and our Blessed Lord on another occasion said “**I knew that Thou hearest me *always*.**” If answered, then the answer neutralized the imprecation.

It is also interesting to inquire why our Lord uttered *aloud* that prayer on the Cross.

He might have wished or willed forgiveness in silence, and the Father would have heard Him and answered. We get a clue to the reason in the context of the passage quoted above. Let us quote it in full. “**And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me**” (John 11:42).

Jesus did not simply wish at the tomb of Lazarus, but said, or spake aloud, that those who heard might believe Him to be the sent of God. Will not this help us to understand why Jesus prayed aloud on the Cross? He knew that in the course of a few days, under the influences of Pentecost, their ignorance would give place to light and conviction, and lest His crucifiers should, in despair, like Judas, hang themselves, they were permitted to remember that in the agony of death He prayed “**Father, forgive them.**”

They were thus encouraged to seek forgiveness of the sin of crucifying Jesus, and of every other sin besides; and they got it, for when He pardons, He abundantly pardons. The sin of crucifying Jesus was a sin, and a great sin, but it was not the sin of the Jews. The *sin* of the Jews then, as now, is the *sin* of the Gentile also—rejecting salvation through the blood after the blood was shed. The rejection of salvation, bought at infinite cost, and offered to the sinner without money and without price, pains the heart of Christ more than the pain of body and mind together experienced in the crucifixion itself.

Thus we regard it as a mistake to suppose that the imprecation uttered nearly 2000 years ago has unfavorably affected the spiritual interests of untold millions of Jews in subsequent generations.

It is a mistake to suppose that the Divine order “**to the Jew first**” has ever been annulled or reversed. “**To the Jew first**” as an *individual* in this dispensation, and as a *nation* in the millennial era, is God’s plan; and the neglect of this order has been followed by disastrous results. Indeed it is probable that the neglect of this Divine order, the culpable neglect by the Church of Christ will be the secondary cause for closing this dispensation in corruption and judgment. The Church ought to have observed this order all through this dispensation, but has failed; the Lord Himself will see that this arrangement is carried out on His return to bless the world.

It is a mistake to suppose that the veil on the Jewish heart is judicial blindness for rejecting Jesus eighteen hundred years ago, and that the veil must be removed in order to render conversion possible. But how can we reconcile the doctrine of a judicial blindness inflicted on the Jewish nation all these centuries for crucifying Jesus, with the fact that thousands upon thousands of Jews were converted after the crucifixion, and it was through the crucifixion itself that they obtained the forgiveness of their sins?

What have the Jews done as a people since apostolic times to render their conversion less practicable now than then? If they could be, and were, converted by thousands then, why not now? God says, **“There is no distinction between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him: for whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved”** (Romans 10:12, 13).

God says with Him there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—He is as able and willing to save the one as the other. Can the Christian Church say that she has made no difference in her prayerful and practical efforts? The responsibility of the results of that difference lies heavily on the Church of Christ to-day.

The Jewish *nation*, it may willingly be admitted, is under God’s ban, or the people would not be out of Palestine, but would be at home in their own land. But national ban affects only temporal interests. The spiritual interests of the individual Jew have not been affected necessarily by the national rejection and dispersion. As to their spiritual interests as individuals, Paul says, **“God hath not cast away his people . . . for I also am an Israelite.”**

There is no vail, affecting spiritual interests, spread over the Jewish people in all ages on account of the conduct of their forefathers eighteen centuries ago.

If there were such a vail, the death of Christ would, in their case at least, work more for destruction than make for salvation, and would illustrate the doctrine of unconditional reprobation on a fearful scale.

Nevertheless the Scripture speaks of vails. How are they explained?

There are *four* vails on the mind of the Jew, but none that interferes at all with the doctrine of perfect equality between Jew and Gentile under the present dispensation, as expressed in Romans 10:12, **“There is no difference between the Jew and the Greek.”**

- Vail 1, is ignorance;
- Vail 2, prejudice;
- Vail 3, that which has obscured and still obscures the typical character of the Levitical economy; and
- Vail 4, that which is the consequence of unbelief.

1st, *Ignorance*.

Romans 10:3 speaks of the Jews as **“being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own.”**

How is this vail to be removed? Impart correct information on any matter of which any people are ignorant, and the vail is at once removed; in other words, **“preach the Gospel to every creature,”** and in exact proportion as this is done the vail of ignorance is removed.

Are not the Gentiles under a Similar Vail?

See Ephesians 4, where Paul speaks of Gentiles walking **“in the vanity of their mind, Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them;”** and then speaks of such Gentiles as **“past feeling,”** and as working **“all uncleanness with greediness.”** Surely if there be a difference at all between Jew and Gentile it is not against the Jew, as far as the vail of ignorance is concerned.

2nd, Prejudice.

The carnal mind is enmity against God in the case of both Jew and Gentile. But some say the Jews are more prejudiced against the Gospel than are the Gentiles. Are not the heathen, the Mohammedans, and even nominal Christians—as Roman and Greek Catholics —prejudiced against the simple and pure Gospel?

Even granting that some Jews are more prejudiced against the Gospel than are some Gentiles, is there not an adequate cause in the cruelties and idolatries of a spurious Christianity? The Jews are not prejudiced against religion in general, but only against Christ and Christianity in particular.

They have power equal to any other people to appreciate that which is sublime in morals and lovely in human character. Why then have they been so bitter against the New Testament and against the Lord Jesus Christ? We reply that nominal Christendom is largely responsible for Jewish prejudice against Christ and Christians. How is this vail to be removed?

- The 1st, ignorance—is to be removed by **“preaching the Gospel,”**
- The 2nd, prejudice—by preaching the Gospel in the spirit of the Gospel, **“that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy,”** not through your *cruelty* or even *neglect*.

Third vail—*that which has obscured, and still obscures the typical character of the Levitical economy.*

But this never hindered conversion and does not now hinder. See II Corinthians 3:12-16 for a reference to this vail.

“Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech: And not as Moses, which put a vail over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished: But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which vail is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart.

“Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away.”

Apart from the nature of the vail altogether, we have two points here very important and very clear.

First, whatever may be the nature of the vail, it was not inflicted on the Jews for rejecting the Lord Jesus Christ, for this vail was on them in the *days of Moses*—hundreds of years before Jesus was born.

The second point is of equal importance. It is to be taken away *after* conversion not *before*—**“Nevertheless when it—the heart—shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away,”** *not*—when the vail is taken away the heart shall turn to the Lord. How many Christians have prayed, and still pray—when they pray for Jews at all—Lord take the vail away that the Jews may turn to the Lord. If this vail was on the Jews in the days of Moses, remained on them till Paul’s day, and rests on them in this our day, what was the nature of the vail?

Look steadily at the Scripture and all will be clear. See Exodus 34:29-35.

“And it came to pass, when Moses came down from mount Sinai with the two tables of testimony in Moses’ hand, when he came down from the mount, that Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone while he talked with him. And when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone; and they were afraid to come nigh him. And Moses called unto them; and Aaron and all the rulers of the congregation returned unto him: and Moses talked with them. And afterward all the children of Israel came nigh: and he gave them in commandment all that the LORD had spoken with him in mount Sinai. And till Moses had done speaking with them, he put a vail on his face. But when Moses went in before the LORD to speak with him, he took the vail off, until he came out. And he came out, and spake unto the children of Israel that which he was commanded. And the children of Israel saw the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses’ face shone: and Moses put the vail upon his face again, until he went in to speak with him.”

Is it not a common view respecting this vail that it was something Moses put over his face, to hide or modify the brightness as being too dazzling to gaze upon? This is a profound mistake, and consequently, where held, the meaning of the vail has been lost.

On the first appearance of Moses, Aaron, the rulers, and the people seem to have started back in fear, for we learn that when Moses called to them, they **“returned unto him”**—first **“Aaron and all the rulers,”** then **“all the children of Israel;”** and Moses told them everything God had said to him before the vail is mentioned at all. And when **“Moses had done speaking with them, he put a vail on his face.”** So we see that the vail was on his face neither when Moses spake to God nor when he spake to the people.

What then was the Nature and Use of the Vail?

Now let us look again into the 3rd chapter of Second Corinthians, and we shall get light. Paul here spoke of ministers of the Gospel as **“ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.”** The law kills for breaking it—**“the soul that sinneth it shall die,”** and **“sin is the transgression of law.”**

But under this dispensation of the Spirit the law-breaker gets life.

And then the apostle continues, “**But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away: How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious? For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory. For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth. For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious**”

This whole paragraph is before us: let us look at it carefully.

The glory on Moses’ face was *external* and *temporary*. The glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ shines out from an indwelling Deity, and is thus *internal* and *abiding*. Here we have “**glory that excelleth.**”

The glory of Moses’ face being *external*, illustrated, if it did not typify, the dispensation of externals then being inaugurated. The temporary nature of the glory— “**which glory was to be done away**”—illustrated or typified the temporary character of the Levitical economy.

What then was the object and teaching of the vail?

The vail was to hide the departing glory, and thus conceal the temporary character and typical nature of the Mosaic economy. This vail is done away in Christ; when the heart of the Jew turns to the Lord, the vail is taken away. As far as this vail is concerned, the Christian Church would be more scripturally employed in using Gospel means, in prayerful dependence on the Holy Spirit, in turning the Jewish heart to the Lord, than even in praying, “Lord, take the vail away, that the Jew may turn to the Lord.” We may scripturally seek the conversion of any Jew while this vail is still on his heart, for it is to be taken away *after* conversion, not necessarily *before*.

Fourth vail—*that which is the consequence of personal unbelief.*

Unbelief is the cause of this blindness—“**because of unbelief they were broken off.**” No man can be guilty of unbelief until he has had an opportunity of believing.

- A man may be in the dark for want of light, whilst another may be blinded with light.
- Many of the heathen are in the dark for want of light, whilst many in Christendom are blinded with light.

No Jew is exposed to judicial blindness for rejecting the Gospel until he has had an opportunity of accepting the Gospel. All Jews have not had such opportunity, and those who have had such opportunity have not all rejected the Gospel; some have always “**believed the things which were spoken**”—the result of Paul’s preaching to the Jews at Rome, and which has been the result of Gospel preaching to the Jews ever since.

Is there no such vail on the Gentiles? In the 4th chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians, Paul refers not only to the vail of ignorance on Gentiles, but also speaks of the “**blindness of their heart**”; “*hardening*” is the meaning of the word.

The Lord permits the god of this world to blind the minds of them that believe not. God threatens to send strong delusion, to the believing of a lie, on those who obey not the truth, but have pleasure in unrighteousness. It is of Gentiles that God says in Romans 1.

“Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God . . . their foolish (senseless) heart was darkened . . . Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts . . . for this cause God gave them up unto vile affections (passions) . . . And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind.”

Surely the blindness inflicted on unbelieving Gentiles is couched in terms as strong as those in which blindness inflicted on unbelieving Jews are expressed. There is certainly no difference in *favor* of the Gentile. The blindness of the Jew at worst is only partial—**“blindness in part is happened to Israel.”**

There is hope, bright hope, for even the broken-off branches— **“And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graff them in again.”**

There is *nothing* in any of these four veils to hinder Jewish conversion, which does not equally discourage Gentile conversion. Indeed, **“there is no difference;”** since then the individual Jew is as eligible for conversion as is the individual Gentile, why should not the Church of Christ regard him as such, and place him, in her evangelistic effort, in the position he occupied eighteen hundred years ago?

- The veil of *ignorance* is to be removed by the simple preaching of the Gospel.
- The veil of *prejudice* is to be removed by preaching the Gospel in the spirit of the Gospel—**“that through your mercy”**—not cruelty, not neglect— **“they also may obtain mercy.”**
- The veil that obscured, and still obscures, the typical character of the Levitical economy, never hindered conversion, for the veil is to be removed *after* the heart has turned to the Lord.

The veil that is the *consequence* of individual unbelief is less hopeful, but not hopeless, for if they abide not in unbelief they **“shall be grafted in, for God is able to graff them in again;”** and the same veil for the same cause is inflicted on Gentiles.

If the Jews are properly treated there is no difficulty in the way of Jewish conversion that is not equaled by difficulties in the way of Gentile conversion. Indeed the scriptures rather encourage the doctrine that Jews are, humanly speaking, less difficult to convert than Gentiles.

Addressing the Gentiles, Paul says, **“For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?”** (Romans 11:24).

Wrong thoughts about the Jews have produced unkind and unchristian feelings towards the Jews; and wrong thoughts and wrong feelings have produced wrong conduct.

It is a mistake to use the expression “*Gentile Church*” as characterizing the Church of this dispensation. This may appear to some a matter of trifling importance, but it suggests unscriptural and dangerous inferences.

It leads Christians to infer that this is a purely Gentile dispensation, so that without any culpable neglect of duty they may leave the Jews alone until the times of the Gentiles close and the Gentile Church, so-called, is complete.

Now there has been a Jewish Church without Gentiles, but never a Gentile Church without Jews.

In the opening of this dispensation Jews were converted by thousands before any Gentiles as such were admitted to a share in the blessings of the Gospel. True, in the gathering of the Jews from all parts of the world at Pentecost, among the strangers from Rome there were “**Jews and proselytes.**” These proselytes, though of Gentile origin, were religiously Jews. When Peter preached the Gospel to the Gentiles he testified “**that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost**” (Acts 2:45).

A little further on we read that “**the Apostles and the brethren that were in Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the Word of God**” (Ch. 11:1).

Further on we read that they “**glorified God, saying, Then to the Gentiles also hath God granted repentance unto life**” (Ch. 11:18).

Paul also speaks of Gentile converts under this dispensation as “**fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel**” (Ephesians 3:6).

And again, as grafted in among Jewish believers, and as becoming “**with them partake of the root and fatness of the olive tree**” (Romans 11:17).

Gentiles were admitted into the Jewish Christian Church only to share on common terms the blessing of a common salvation: and the “**also to the Gentile**” is as truly the revealed mind of God as is “**to the Jew first.**”

~ end of chapter 10 ~

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Israel’s Mission, and Missions to Israel

by

John Wilkinson

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CHAPTER ELEVEN

SOME CHIEF MISTAKES OF THE JEWS CONCERNING THE MESSIAH—STATED AND CORRECTED

We earnestly desire to render service to our fellow Christians, as the Lord may enable us, not only to a simple and clear view of the Divine purpose in Israel; the place of the Jew in the present dispensation; and by correcting mistakes some Christians make respecting the Jews; but also by encouraging all Christians to take some part in the evangelization of the Jews.

Many Christians are both able and willing to aid Gospel work amongst the Jews by *prayer* and by *money* gifts, for which we are truly grateful to God and to them. But many Christians might give most valuable aid, and get an additional blessing, by personal effort in the work of Jewish conversion. Many Christians we know have been deterred from speaking to Jews because they have such a limited acquaintance with those parts of Old Testament Scripture which answer Jewish objections and solve Jewish difficulties.

The modern Jew, under the influence of Rabbinism, has fallen into the mistake that the Lord is an absolute unity, when his Old Testament Scriptures teach a Trinity in Unity.

- He has fallen into the mistake that God has no Son, when his Scriptures teach that God has a Son.
- He has fallen into the mistake that the Messiah cannot be Deity incarnate, though his Scriptures teach this doctrine.
- He has fallen into the mistake that the Messiah cannot be both Divine and human, though his Scriptures set Him forth as such.
- He has fallen into the mistake that because Jesus was not Joseph’s natural child therefore he was not David’s son.
- He has fallen into the mistake that simply eating unleavened bread is keeping the Passover.
- He has fallen into the fatal mistake that almsgiving, prayers, and fasting have taken the place of sacrifices, and that atoning blood is not now necessary as a basis of forgiveness of sins.

Instead of correcting these mistakes by simply quoting and expounding the passages of Scripture which bear directly upon them, we propose to correct these mistakes in the form of conversations with Jews, which we trust will make the truth more realistic and impressive.

The points discussed here are also thrown into tract form for distribution amongst the Jews (*Tracts for Jews*, Nos. 1 to 7).

Our Christian readers, who may not know Hebrew, need not be afraid of the quotations in that tongue, for they are all translated, but it is desirable to let the Jewish reader see his Scriptures in his own language.

~ end of chapter 11 ~

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CHAPTER TWELVE

TRI-UNITY

TRACTS FOR JEWS NUMBER 1

יהוה אלהי ישראל

The Lord, God of Israel

Jew. We Jews believe in God, one God, one only.

All true Jews say: שמע ישראל יהוה אלהינו יהוה אחד: **“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God *is* one LORD.”** You will never get a Jew to believe in more Gods than one. Never.

Christian. We Christians believe in one God, and one only; and if the Jews think that we believe in more than one, they are mistaken.

Jew. But I have been told that the Christians believe in three Gods—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Christian. True, the Christians believe in Father, Son, and Spirit, but only in one God—a Trinity in Unity.

Jew. Where do the Christians get their doctrine of a Trinity from? They profess to believe our Tanach is inspired, but they will never find the Trinity taught there.

Christian. We so thoroughly believe your Old Testament Scriptures are inspired of God, that if we could not find the Trinity taught there we would not and dare not believe it ourselves. Would you believe the doctrine if found plainly taught in your Tanach?

Jew. Yes, certainly. Show it me there and I will believe.

Christian. We can get no true knowledge of God apart from what he is pleased to tell us. God has spoken in the Old Testament. That this is true Jews and Christians devoutly believe; so we

must neither of us indulge in our fancies, but must both submit to the Word of God, and in a childlike spirit ask, “**What saith the Scripture.**”

Jew. That, I admit, is quite fair and proper; we cannot find out God except by searching the Holy Scriptures—Let us begin.

Christian. You know, to begin with, that **אלהים Elohim**, is in the plural; the same as *Cherubim*, and *Seraphim*, and that this *Elohim* says in Genesis 1:26, “**Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness.**” And yet the passage does not say “And they said,” but “**And God (He) said, let Us make man,**” that is, it **ויאמר** is in the singular. So you see we have the singular and the plural both applied to God in the account of the creation of man.

Then again in Genesis 11:7, when, after the flood, the people set about building a city and a tower, **הכה נרדה** “**the Lord said**” (said is again in the singular) . . . “**Let Us go down, and let Us confound**” **נרדה ונבלה** Here we find the singular and the plural mixed again, when the word for God is not Elohim but the Lord.

Jew. Well, this seems strange, but also true, whatever we make of it. But does this prove a Trinity? We think not. We Jews have always thought that the plural in these passages means nothing more than dignity or excellence. Do you mean to say these passages teach the doctrine of a Trinity in Unity?

Christian. They plainly teach a plurality in Unity. But as two make a plural, we own we cannot get a Trinity out of a simple plural; so we must go to other passages to find a Trinity.

Jew. Well, that seems fair. We Jews surely want nothing less and nothing more than what the Scriptures teach. God’s Word taken in its plain and obvious sense should settle everything between Jew and Christian. Give me one clear passage in proof of the Trinity, such as any poor uneducated man can understand.

Christian. Turn then at once to Isaiah 63:8-10 **להם למושיע: ויהי** “**He (the Lord) was to them (Israel) a Saviour.**” This the Jew will admit at once—that the Lord was Israel’s Saviour. This the Christian as firmly believes. The Lord is the source of salvation for all sinners, Jews and Gentiles.

Now let us go on to the next clause in verse 9.

בכל צרתם לא צר ומלאך פניו הושיעם — “**In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence (face) saved them.**” Now this **מלאך פניו**—“**Angel of His presence**”, is an uncreated Angel, receiving throughout Old Testament Scripture the titles and honors which belong to the Lord alone, as in the history of Hagar, Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Joshua, Gideon and Manoah, as also in the prophecies of Zechariah.

Just take one instance out of many. See Genesis 31:11, 13, מלאך האלהים—the **Angel of God**—said, Jacob, and Jacob said, “**Here am I.**” Then the Angel said, אנכי האל בית-אל—“**I am the God of Bethel.**” Now the Jews themselves call this Angel “*Malach Adonai*”— **the Angel of the Lord**. But He is not only the Angel of the Lord, but the Lord Himself, for He says Himself, “**I am the God of Bethel,**” and surely that was none other than the Lord.

Now what do we learn so far? Why, plainly this, that the Lord is the source of salvation, but that salvation somehow or other flows through, or is ministered by, the Angel of the Lord’s presence, and Who says of Himself “**I am the God of Bethel.**” This is not man’s fancy but God’s plain Word. We have so far got two persons in the Godhead. Now let us see if we can find a third person, making a Trinity.

Just look carefully at verse 10 of this same 63rd chapter of Isaiah והמה מרו ועצבו את-רוח קדשו—“**But they rebelled, and vexed his holy Spirit,**” the meaning of “**vexed**” is substantially the same as *grieved*.

Jew. Yes; we believe in the spirit of God, but only as an influence—not as a Person.

Christian. So do some professing Christians. We have nothing, however, to say as to what some Christians and some Jews believe, but we have to do with what the Old Testament teaches.

What is an influence? Light is an influence. Heat is an influence. We can quench light and we can quench heat; but we can neither vex nor grieve either light or heat. We can vex and grieve only a Person. So, then, as the Jews vexed and grieved the Holy Spirit, so that He turned to be their enemy, and Himself fought against them, the Holy Spirit is a Person and is God. Don’t you see, my friend, that if you deny the personality of the Holy Spirit you deny the personality of God Himself, for God is Spirit? And don’t you also see how Isaiah 48:16 beautifully and clearly confirms this? Look at it carefully and without prejudice:

ועתה אדני יהוה שלחני ורוחי:—“**The Lord God and His Spirit hath sent Me** (the Messiah).” Here you have the personality of the Spirit, and the doctrine of the Trinity confirmed.

Jew. Certainly, the Christians have more to say for themselves than I had ever dreamt of. I can’t deny my own Scriptures, and they certainly seem to teach a Trinity. How is it, then, that our people generally, but specially our Rabbis, don’t believe this doctrine?

Christian. They believed this doctrine in ancient times, to which ancient Jewish literature (including the Talmud) bears ample testimony. Even the letter ׁ shin, the initial letter of the word “*Shaddai*” (*Almighty*), was formerly taken by Jews to represent the manner of the Divine existence—three in one, a Trinity—with its three perpendicular strokes, and one horizontal uniting the three.

Then the blessing pronounced by the High Priest in the 6th chapter of Numbers is substantially the same as the New Testament benediction,

- First, “**the Lord bless thee, and keep thee,**” as the *Father* and source of all blessing;
- Then, “**the Lord make His face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee.**” This answers to “**the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,**” for, while the law was given by Moses, grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, and the glory of God is seen in the face of Jesus Christ;
- Then, the *Holy Spirit*’s blessing, “**the Lord lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.**” This answers to “peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.”

Jew. But if our forefathers believed this doctrine, and our people now reject it, what has caused the change?

Christian. In the middle ages the old doctrine was rejected as coming from a corrupt and persecuting Christianity, and the great Moses Maimonides, who wrote the thirteen articles of the Jewish faith, gave an *absolute* sense to the unity of the Godhead which before had been understood in a *compound* sense—that is, a Trinity in Unity.

So now, when the Jew says, “*Shema Yisrael Adonai Eloheinu Adonai echad*,” “**Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one,**” he thinks of *echad* (*one*) as an absolute, and not as a compound unity; whereas יְהוָה *yacheed*, represents an absolute, but *yacheed*, which occurs about twelve times in the Old Testament, is never once used to express the unity of God.

It is used three times:

- In the 22nd chapter of Genesis, respecting Isaac,
- In verses 2, 12, and 16, “**Thy son, thine only son.**”
- It is used also of Jephthah’s daughter, Judges 11:34, “**She was his only child.**”
- In Psalm 22:20, and 35:17, it is translated “**darling;**”
- In Psalm 25:16, by the word “**desolate;**”
- In Psalm 68:6, by the word “**solitary.**”
- In Proverbs 4:3 it is rendered “**only beloved,**” in the expression “**tender and only beloved;**”
- In Jeremiah 6:26, Amos 8:10, and Zechariah 12:10, it is translated “**only son,**” literally, an only one.

Now, it is very remarkable that this one Hebrew word, which expresses absolute unity, should not have been used even once to express the unity of the Godhead.

We fairly infer that the Godhead is a compound unity, and not an absolute.

Jew. What, then, are we to understand by the *Echad* (*one*)?

Christian. אֶחָד *Echad* (*one*), is associated with the root *mm Yachad* (to unite), and represents a compound unity. It occurs in Old Testament Scripture several hundreds of times. It is used in Numbers 13:23, “**a branch with one cluster of grapes,**” many grapes in one cluster, a compound unity.

In Judges 20:1, 8, 11, we find that “**all the children of Israel went out, and the congregation was gathered together as one man;**” again, “**And all the people arose as one man;**” and again, “**All the men of Israel were gathered against the city, knit together as one man.**” Surely these expressions represent a compound unity.

This meaning of *echad* is further confirmed by evening and morning being called יום אחד *yom echad* (day one), Genesis 1:5. Again, “**Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh,**” בשר אחד, Genesis 2:24. And again, the two sticks in Ezekiel 37:16-19 shall become עץ אחד *aitz echad* (one stick). See particularly verse 17, “**And join them one to another (literally to one) into one stick, and they shall become one in thy hand,**” והיו לאחדים בידך literally, they shall become *ones* (a plural unity) in thy hand. You see that אחדים *echadim* is *echad* in the plural, the same as Elohim, and both alike represent a compound unity—one a Dual in Unity, and the other a Trinity in Unity.

Now then, as *echad* plainly represents a compound, and not an absolute unity, the words, “**Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one,**” teach not only a compound unity in the Godhead, but also a Trinity in Unity; for the name of God is mentioned three times in the passage, as *Jehovah*, *Elohenu*, and the *Lord*, and then the word *echad*, uniting the three in one; thus we have a Trinity in Unity.

Modern Rabbinism differs essentially from ancient Mosaism. Ancient Mosaism and New Testament Christianity are essentially the same religion. The true Jew is the Jewish believer in, and follower of, the Lord Jesus Christ.

~ end of chapter 12 ~

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CHAPTER THIRTEEN

SONSHIP

TRACTS FOR JEWS NUMBER 2

“What is the Name of His Son.”

Jew. The Christians say they believe in Jesus as the Son of God. They must abandon this doctrine before they can expect the Jews to become Christians. We Jews do not and cannot believe that God ever had a Son.

Christian. Don’t be quite so positive: what Jews have believed the Jews can believe. Jews have believed that God has a Son, that Jesus is that Son, and multitudes of Gentiles have received the doctrine on the testimony of believing Jews.

Jew. Have any of our people ever believed that God, the God of Israel, has a son? If they have, please tell me who, and when, and where.

Christian. We got the information from Palestine, that a Jewish virgin of the house of David was told by the Angel Gabriel that she would be the mother of a child by the power of the Holy Ghost, that His name was to be Jesus, and that He was to be called “**the Son of God.**” In the 4th chapter of Matthew’s Gospel, when Jesus was tempted, the Devil said, “**If thou be the Son of God;**” suggesting by the “**if**” that Jesus claimed to be such. Then in the 14th chapter of Matthew it is stated that some Jewish fishermen, among whom was Peter, after they had seen Jesus walking on the Sea of Galilee, “**worshipped Him, saying, ‘Of a truth, Thou art the Son of God.’**” Then, again, before His crucifixion, during the mock trial the High Priest said unto Him, “**I adjure thee by the Living God, that Thou tell us whether Thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said.**” It is so (Matthew 26:63).

Then again, when Jesus was hanging on the Cross, the chief priests and elders, even while mocking Him, bore testimony that “**He said, I am the Son of God**” (Ch. 27:43); and when he expired, and the vail of the temple was rent from the top to the bottom, not from the bottom to the top—it was rent from heaven “**and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent, and the tombs were opened, and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, . . .**

“then the centurion and they that were with him watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, feared exceedingly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God” (Ch. 27:54).

Then again when Saul of Tarsus, a Jew possessed of a powerful mind, and deep learning, and was also very religious, when he became converted, **“straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God.” “And confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is the very Christ (Messiah).”**

Now Matthew was a Jew, Peter was a Jew, Paul was a Jew, and thousands of other Jews have believed that God has a Son and Jesus is that Son. So you see it is not impossible for a Jew to believe that God has a Son.

Jew. Granted the historical truth of the New Testament. Granted that the New Testament teaches that God has a Son, and that Jesus is that Son, and also that thousands of our people believed in Jesus as the Messiah and Son of God, still we Jews are not bound by the New Testament; we believe only what is taught in our Tanach (O.T.), and no such doctrine as Son of God is to be found there.

Christian. Then you Jews would believe this doctrine if found as plainly taught in the Old Testament, as in the New, would you?

Jew. Certainly. We stand by our own Hebrew Scriptures—Moses, Prophets and Psalms, and will believe anything fairly proved from our sacred writings. But you will not find this doctrine there.

Christian. Wait a little. Let us see. Look carefully at Psalm 72. The first verse says, **“Give the King Thy judgments, O God, and Thy righteousness לְכֹנֶן מֶלֶךְ unto the King’s Son.”** The 8th verse says of this same Son **“He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth.”** 11th verse, **“Yea, all kings shall fall down before Him, all nations shall serve Him.”** 15, **“prayer also shall be made for him continually; and daily shall he be praised.”** 17, **“His Name shall endure for ever, His Name shall be continued (יָיִן yinneen, shall be as a Son to continue forever His Father’s Name) as long as the sun, and men shall be blessed in Him, all nations shall call Him blessed.”**

These expressions do not fit, and cannot be made to fit Solomon. A greater than Solomon is here. Try each sentence on Solomon, and you will find the clothing much too large; try them on Jesus, and you will find an exact fit.

Jew. I admit the phraseology is very remarkable and the difficulty of applying it to Solomon, yet it nowhere in the Psalm says distinctly, that is, in so many words, that the Person spoken of is the “Son of God.”

Christian. Granted. But the Person spoken of is a King’s Son, and the Lord is King; and the description given does not fit any mere earthly king or king’s son.

Let us look further. Turn to the 2nd Psalm. Here both Jews and Christians regard this Psalm as Messianic, for the Messiah is mentioned by name in the 2nd verse, “על־יהוה ועל־משיחו” **“against the Lord, and against His anointed (Messiah).”** In the 6th verse the Lord calls Him **“My King;”** and in the 7th verse the Messiah says, **“the Lord hath said unto Me, בני אתה Thou art my Son”;** and in the last verse, referring to the same Person, we have the exhortation **“Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and ye perish . . . Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him.”**

Here we have the doctrine of Son of God plainly taught—that the Son of God is also the Messiah, and also a Divine Person, for a blessing is pronounced on all who trust in Him, while a curse is denounced on all who trust in a mere man. See Jeremiah 17:5, 7, **“Cursed be the man that trusteth in man.” “Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord.”**

Now let us turn to Proverbs 30:4. Here we have something well deserving the closest attention. **“Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? —מִהְשֵׁמוּ וּמִהְשִׁיבָנוּ כִּי תֹדַע—What is His name, and what is His Son’s name, if thou canst tell.”**

In answer to the question, **“What is His name?”** the Jew will at once reply, **“The Lord God of Israel.”** The Christian will give the same answer. Why should not the Jew be able to answer as promptly the next question, **“What is the name of His Son?”**

Jew. This is certainly a very remarkable verse. The Christians have more to say for themselves than most Jews think. The Old Testament Scriptures seem to favor the doctrine of a Son of God almost as much as the New. But angels and good people in the Scriptures are called **“sons of God.”** Must the Son of God be necessarily Divine?

Christian. So far as the term **“Son of God”** is concerned, we readily admit that it may be applied to an angel or to a mere man; but the Son of God spoken of in the Old Testament Scriptures cannot be a mere man or an angel if the Scriptures are to be fulfilled, and God’s Word cannot be broken. To fulfil Scripture the Son of God must be a Divine Person, so cannot be a mere man; He is also to be the *Son of David*, so cannot be a mere angel. Now turn to Isaiah 7:14—הִנֵּה שְׂמוֹ עִמָּנוּ אֵל הַעֲלָמָה הָרָה וְיִלְדֵת בֶּן וְקָרָאת **“Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.”**

Here we have a child promised as miraculously begotten of a pure Jewish virgin; otherwise she would be no virgin at all, but a young married woman, and then it would be no sign (אֵיטָה) but an ordinary event.

Jew. Well, but Jesus was never called Immanuel, so how can this refer to Jesus?

Christian. It does not mean that Immanuel will be a proper name, but that Immanuel will describe His nature or character. He will be called, because He will be **“God with us.”**

We have several illustrations of such phraseology in the Old Testament Scriptures—for instance, at the end of the book of Ezekiel we have, “**And the name of the city (Jerusalem) from that day shall be—יהודה שמה—Jehovah Shammah, The Lord is there.**” Again, in Isaiah 1:26, Jerusalem is to be called “**The city of righteousness, the faithful city.**” Then again, in Isaiah 62:12, the Jewish people are to be called—עם דקדקש גאלי יהודה—“**the holy people, the redeemed of the LORD;**” and the city Jerusalem is to be called—דרושה עיר לא נעזבה—“**Sought out, a city not forsaken.**” Now, no one understands these as proper names, but as descriptive of character. So you see your own Scriptures teach that the Messiah is to be human and Divine; as to His human nature He was to be born of a pure Jewish virgin, and as to His Divine nature He was to be Immanuel—God with us.

Jew. As you keep so close to our Scriptures, I am curious to hear more. Do any other Scriptures appear to confirm this doctrine?

Christian. Yes. Look at Isaiah 9:6, 7,—בן נתקלנו ותהי המשרה על שכמי—“For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given.” The child born refers to the human nature; the Son given, given by God as Father, represents the Divine nature. “**And the government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called** (that is, He shall be), **Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.**”

These terms could not with any propriety be applied to any mere man, but can only be applied to a Person who is Divine as well as human, and most appropriately to Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of David and the Son of God.

Jew. I like to know all that our Scriptures say on this subject, and I must confess I find it difficult to explain away all these passages, but I also feel a difficulty in believing that God has a Son, and yet there is only One God.

Christian. True there is only One God, but that One God is a Trinity in Unity. This is a matter revealed in Scripture to our faith, and not to our reason for explanation or speculation. You cannot understand how spirit, soul and body make up one man, but you believe they do.

We Christians read and believe the Old Testament as well as the New, and we find a Messiah promised of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Judah, of the house of David, and who is also to be the Son of God. Jesus is the only one who has met all the demands of the Old Testament Scriptures so far as atoning suffering is concerned.

Thousands of Jews have believed in Jesus as the Son of God and Saviour of sinners; and Jews have told us that “**God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.**” Also that “**God sent His Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.**”

And again, **“He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, but he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him”** (John 3:16, 17, 36).

The doctrine of Divine Sonship should not be strange to a Jew. The Lord God acknowledges the Messiah as His Son in the 2nd Psalm. There is an inquiry as to the name of His Son in Proverbs 30:4. The Virgin Mary is told by the Angel Gabriel that the child she shall bear shall be called **“the Son of God.”**

On entering on His Messianic work at His baptism in the Jordan, God speaks from heaven and says of Jesus, **“This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”** A similar testimony is borne on the Mount of Transfiguration.

John, the Jew, says, **“And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ.”**

This same Jew says, **“If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God”** (I John 5:9-13).

Listen to His call, **“Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”**

COME WITHOUT DELAY

~ end of chapter 13 ~

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“ISRAEL MY GLORY”

Israel’s Mission, and Missions to Israel

by

John Wilkinson

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CHAPTER FOURTEEN

DEITY OF THE MESSIAH

TRACTS FOR JEWS NUMBER 3

מלאך יהוה

The Angel of the Lord

Jew. We Jews readily admit that Jesus of Nazareth was a very good man; most enlightened Jews agree to this, but we cannot believe that he was God, or, as the Christians put it—that He was God manifest in the flesh. No, Jews will never believe this.

Christian. If Jesus was a mere man he could not be a good man, for good men speak the truth. How could any mere man say, “**I and My Father are One;**” “**Before Abraham was, I am.**”

Suppose we leave Jesus out of account just now, and consider the doctrine of the Messiah as revealed in the Old Testament Hebrew Scriptures, just as though no one had ever appeared professing to be the promised Messiah. Will you submit to Old Testament teaching on this subject?

Jew. Certainly. We can know nothing about the Messiah, His person, His work, or the time of His coming, except as revealed in our Tanach. Outside our Scriptures nothing can be known, not even whether there is to be any Messiah at all.

Christian. Then will you with an unprejudiced mind receive as the truth of God anything fairly proved from your Old Testament Hebrew Scriptures?

Jew. Yes, if you fairly prove from our Scriptures the Deity of the Messiah, I am bound to believe; but if you can’t prove the doctrine, you are bound to give it up.

Christian. Yes, quite fair. We neither of us have any real interests against the teaching of God’s blessed Word. There is, you know, a very important personage spoken of frequently in the Old Testament under the designation—מלאך יהוה—*Malack Jehovah*, or, as the Jews say, *Malack Adonai*.

Who is this Angel of the Lord? Let us look at a few passages and see what is said of Him. Turn to Genesis, 16th chapter, and we shall see what this Angel says to Hagar, and what she says of Him. In verse 10 He says, “**I will multiply thy seed exceedingly.**” This seems language suited only to the Lord. Verse 13 says, “**And she called the name of the Lord that spake to her, Thou God seest me,**”—וְתִקְרָא שֵׁם יְיָוָה הַדֹּבֵר אֵלֶיהָ אַתָּה אֵל—or, as the Jews more correctly render the latter clause “Thou art God, visible to me.”

Jew. Well, that is a remarkable passage, anyhow; are there any more at all like it?

Christian. Yes, several more. Before we refer to others, just look again at the passage respecting Hagar. In the 7th verse of that 16th of Genesis you see the Angel found Hagar “**by a fountain of water;**” then in the 14th verse the well is called—בְּאֵר לְחַי רֹאִי—**Beer-lahai-roi**, “*the well of the Living and Seeing One.*”

Now look at Genesis 18th chapter. The first verse tells us that the Lord appears to Abraham in the plains of Mamre. Then Abraham lifts up his eyes and sees three men, he provides food for them, which they eat, verse 8; they then ask for Sarah, and one of the three promises Sarah a Son, at which she laughs, then the Lord asks Abraham, “**Wherefore did Sarah laugh.**” verse 13; and in verse 14 asks,—הֲיִפְלֵא מִיָּדֶיךָ דָּבָר—“**Is any thing too hard (wonderful) for the Lord.**”

In verse 16 the men rise up, look toward Sodom, and Abraham goes with them to bring them on the way; “**And the LORD said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do.**”

Then we have Abraham’s pleadings with the Lord on behalf of the guilty and doomed cities, and at the end of the chapter “**the Lord went His way,**” and the next verse states that two angels came to Sodom at even.

Now plainly these three called men,—אֲנִיִּם—were heavenly messengers, and one of the three was evidently the Lord. Now look at Genesis 22:15, 16, and we find the same Angel of the Lord calling to, Abraham the second time from heaven, and saying, “**By Myself have I sworn, saith the Lord.**” This also looks as though the Angel of the Lord and Jehovah were one and the same person.

Jew. This is very wonderful. Let us go on, it is very interesting.

Christian. In Genesis 31:11, this same Angel, called—מַלְאֲךְ הָאֱלֹהִים—the Angel of God, speaks to Jacob, and in the 13th verse says,—אֲנִי הָאֵל בֵּיתֶל—“**I am the God of Bethel.**”

Evidently this Angel is really and truly God, if the Scriptures are to be understood to mean just what they say.

Now in Genesis 32nd chapter we have another remarkable event in Jacob’s history. Jacob was left alone; but there wrestled a man—אִישׁ—with him until the breaking; of the day, verse 24.

This man said to Jacob, **“Let me go;”** Jacob said, **“I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me.”** Then He asked Jacob his name, and changed it to Israel, giving the reason for the change, **“for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.”**

Then Jacob asked His name, but the messenger does not give it, but we shall get it further on.

Now in verse 30, **“Jacob called the name of the place—פניאל—Peniel (face of God), for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.”**

Again, this same—מלאך יהוה—Angel of the Lord, appeared to Moses, in the 3rd chapter of Exodus, **“in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush.”** Moses turned, aside to see why the bush was not burnt. **“And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush.”**

The Angel of the Lord and Jehovah are plainly one and the same Person.

Now look at the 6th chapter of Judges, where Gideon is commissioned to smite the Midianites. In the 12th verse the—מלאך יהוה—Angel of the Lord, appears to Gideon, and talks with him; then in verse 14 it is the Lord who looks upon him and says, **“Go in this thy might,”** and in verse 16 it is the Lord who says, **“Surely I will be with thee.”** Gideon asks Him not to depart before He brings him some food, and He said, **“I will tarry until thou come again.”** Gideon prepares the food.

The Angel of God tells Gideon to pour out the broth, and lay the cakes and flesh on a rock, and then the Angel of the Lord touched the cakes and flesh with the end of his staff, and fire came out of the rock and consumed the cakes and flesh. **“And when Gideon perceived that He was an —מלאך יהוה—Angel of the Lord, Gideon said, Alas, O Lord God! . . . and the Lord said unto him, Peace be unto thee; fear not: thou shalt not die.”** Here again, the Angel of God, the Angel of the Lord, and Jehovah are one and the same Person.

Jew. This is very strange, but difficult to gainsay; but even should all this be true, it only proves that the Great Jehovah has appeared at times as an Angel, or in the form of a man; it does not prove that this was the Messiah and that He became incarnate in a human body.

Christian. Let us pursue this subject a little further, and we shall get more light as we go on. Now turn to Judges, 13th chapter. Here we find this same—מלאך יהוה—Angel of the Lord, and shall here get a closer acquaintance with Him from information which He Himself gives us.

Manoah’s wife has no child. The Angel of the Lord appears to her, and tells her she shall have a son. The same information was given to Sarah, and no doubt by the same Person. Manoah’s wife tells her husband that **“a Man of God came to me, and His countenance was like the countenance of an Angel of God,—מלאך האלהים—very terrible.”**

Manoah prays that the Man of God—אִישׁ הָאֱלֹהִים—may come again, and tell them what they shall do to the child when born. “**And God hearkened to the voice of Manoah, and the—מִלְאָךְ הָאֱלֹהִים—Angel of God, came again to the woman as she sat in the field.**” She quickly ran and told her husband that the same Man had come again. Manoah at once arose, and followed his wife, and came to the Man, and said to Him, “**Art Thou the Man—הָאִישׁ—that spakest unto the woman.**” —וַיֹּאמֶר אָנִי—*vayomer ahnee*, “**And He said, I am.**”

Before the interview closes, Manoah ventures to ask the name of this—מִלְאָךְ יְהוָה—Angel of the Lord. “**And the—מִלְאָךְ יְהוָה—Angel of the Lord said unto him, Wherefore askest thou after My name, seeing it is Secret (Wonderful)**”—פְּלִיא—*P’lee*.

Now, we at once admit that the K’ree, or marginal reading is—פְּלִי—*P’lee*, without the—א—Aleph. But even this form, as well as the K’tiv, written form, simply gives the word the meaning of an *adjective* instead of that of a noun, with substantially the same meaning. There is no real difference between *Wonderful* and a *Wonderful One*; neither of them are proper names, but are both alike descriptive of character.

This prepares the way for identifying the—פְּלִיא—*P’lee*, with the—פֶּלֶא—*Pele*, Wonderful, of Isaiah 9:7. Although this word—פֶּלֶא—occurs several times in Scripture, and is translated by such words as Wonders, Wonderful, Marvellous, yet the—מִלְאָךְ יְהוָה—Angel of the Lord gives it only once as His name, descriptive of His character, for when Manoah offered a kid on a rock to the Lord, the Angel did wondrously, —מִפֶּלֶא

Here we have the same root-word. Manoah now says to his wife, “**We shall surely die, because we have seen God.**”

This Angel of the Lord can be none other than Jehovah Himself.

- He is spoken of as one of the three men who came to Abraham.
- He is spoken of as a Man when wrestling with Jacob.
- He answers Manoah’s question, “**Art Thou the Man.**” by a distinct “**I am.**”
- Hagar calls this Angel the Lord who spake with her, and as God visible to her.
- Moses at the bush speaks of this Angel as God.
- This Angel says to Jacob, “**I am the God of Bethel.**”
- Manoah says in the person of this Angel he has seen God.

And now, if this—מִלְאָךְ יְהוָה—Angel of the Lord; this—מִלְאָךְ הָאֱלֹהִים—Angel of God; this—אִישׁ הָאֱלֹהִים—Man of God, is the Lord Himself; and if the Scriptures mean what they say, He is none other than the Lord Himself; then the Lord has appeared in Old Testament times in the form of a man, though not incarnate.

If the Lord has appeared as a man *without* a human body, there is no difficulty in believing that He has appeared as a man in a human body. He who dwelt in the—קֹדֶשׁ הַקֳּדָשִׁים—most holy place in the Tabernacle and Temple could also dwell in the temple of the sinless body of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Thus, in Isaiah 9:6, 7, we have the incarnation predicted, **“Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called—פֶּלֶא יִיעָן אֵל גִּבּוֹר אֲבִיעֵד שְׁרֵ-שָׁלוֹם—*Pele, Yoaits, Ail-gibbor, Avi-ad, Sar-shalom—Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*”**

The “Pele” here is the same as the P’lee in Judges, and the—אֵל גִּבּוֹר—Ail-gibbor, is the same as the Ail-gibbor in Isaiah 10:21, **“The remnant shall return, even the remnant of Jacob, unto—אֵל גִּבּוֹר—Ail-gibbor, the Mighty God.”**

In plain words, the Jews will have to get back to God through the Pele and Ail-gibbor, incarnate in the Person of Jesus of Nazareth, who was the Child born and the Son given, and having died as an atonement for sin, risen again from the dead, and is now seated at the right hand of the Father, according to the 110th Psalm, is soon coming back again to take the throne of David, and, as the Prince of Peace, give universal peace to this distracted world.

Then the Jews will use the language of Isaiah 25:1, 9, **“O Lord, Thou art my God: I will exalt Thee, I will praise Thy name; for Thou hast done wonderful things.”** “Wonderful” here is simply—פֶּלֶא—Pele; there is no word for things in the text **“And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation.”**

Jew. If all this be true (and it is difficult to disprove) then God Himself becomes our Messiah. At all events, I confess the difficulty of doubting the Deity of the Messiah, while at the same time believing the Divine inspiration of our Scriptures.

Christian. It is just because we Christians believe your Scriptures to be the Word of God, that we believe in the Deity of the Messiah; for God says in Jeremiah, 23rd chapter, that He will raise unto David—צִמְחָה צְדִיקָה—righteous Branch And this is His name whereby He shall be called—יְהוָה צְדִיקָה—Jehovah Tsidkenu, Jehovah our Righteousness.

“God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son . . . Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.”

To this One Jehovah says, **“Thou art my Son,”** and also **“Unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever”** (Hebrews 1:8).

A believing and inspired Jew tells us that Christ Jesus, who was in the form of God, emptied Himself, took the form of a servant, was made in the likeness of men; **“and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”**

Jews and Gentiles are sinners, and great sinners, and none but a great Saviour can meet their need. Jesus is the Jews’ Messiah and a Divine Saviour for all sinners, so He sweetly says, **“If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink.”**

~ end of chapter 14 ~

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by

John Wilkinson

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CHAPTER FIFTEEN

MESSIAH—HUMAN AND DIVINE

TRACTS FOR JEWS NUMBER 4

הנה אִישׁ צֶמַח שֵׁמֶךְ

Behold the Man Whose Name is Tsemach—Branch

Jew. You Christians must not ask the Jews to believe in a Messiah, whether Jesus or any other, as Son of God and Son of Man; for if He is Son of God, He cannot be also Son of Man; and if He is Son of Man, then He cannot be Son of God.

Christian. We Christians know nothing about a Messiah at all, neither name, nor origin, nor character, nor mission, except as we study your Old Testament Hebrew Scriptures. They tell us all we know about the Messiah. Do you Jews know anything about the Messiah outside your Tanach?

Jew. No, certainly not; but for our Tanach we would know nothing of the Messiah. Our wise men tell us that our Messiah is to be a man, nothing more, coming from the tribe of Judah, and of the house of David?

Christian. If any rich, truthful, and kind-hearted man were to give us a costly present which he himself had made, we should think it true wisdom on our part, not to give him information about it, but to receive information from him as to its material, make, and use. God, who has given us Messiah, has told us all we can know or desire to know. Shall we not ask God?

Jew. That is right. Let us go to the Bible at once. We Jews want to know the Messiah God has given—just this, no more, no less.

Christian. Agreed. For the Jew and for the Christian it should be “**What saith the Scripture,**” that is, What saith the God of Israel?

- In point No. 1 we have shown that the *God of Israel is a Trinity in Unity.*
- In point No. 2 we have shown that *God has a Son.*
- In point No. 3 we have shown the *Deity of the Messiah.*

Now let us see if the Old Testament Scriptures do not plainly teach the twofold nature of the Messiah—human and Divine—just as clearly as the New Testament teaches that Jesus was the Son of David and the Son of God.

You probably know that we have four Gospels in the New Testament, called Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Each of these Gospels gives a different aspect of the Lord Jesus Christ, making four photographs, so to speak, of one and the same Person.

- Matthew's photograph represents Jesus as the *Messiah of the Jews, Son of David and King of Israel*.
- Mark's photograph represents Jesus as the *Servant of the Lord*.
- Luke's photograph represents Jesus as the *Son of Man*;
- John's photograph represents Jesus as the *Son of God*.

Jew. I cannot understand how anyone can be a Servant, and a Son of Man, and also the Son of God. This is very interesting about Jesus and the four Gospels, but this is not Old Testament Scripture. Show me some Old Testament Scripture that teaches anything like this of the Messiah. We Jews must have it from our Tanach.

Christian. We Christians readily grant this appeal to the Hebrew Scriptures of the Old Testament; for "The New is in the Old contained; the Old is by the New explained; "or, as Luther puts it, "The New is unfolded in the Old; the Old is unfolded in the New." The Old Testament is an extraordinary and complicated lock, to which the Jesus of the New is the only key that fits. Use that key and you will be let into the possession of boundless treasure. Now let us look at the Old Testament and see if we cannot find the four Gospel photographs as plainly taught there. The Hebrew word—צֶמַח—*Tsemach*—Branch, is acknowledged by Jews and Christians to be a word peculiarly Messianic. Now under this word—Branch—we have the four photographs of the Messiah just like the four given of Jesus in the Gospels. Is not this very remarkable?

Jew. Is this really so? Let me hear.

Christian. Look at Jeremiah 23:5. "**Behold, the days come, saith the LORD—**וְהָקֵמְתִי לְדָוִד צֶמַח—**that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper . . . and this is the name whereby He shall be called—**יְהוָה צְדִקְנוּ—*Jehovah Tsidkenu, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.*"

Here the Messiah, who is certainly meant, is to be a branch of David, *the Righteous Branch*, and at the same time is to be *the Lord our Righteousness*. Here we have not only the twofold nature of the Messiah, but also Matthews photograph, as the Messiah of the Jews, the Son of David, and the King of Israel.

Now let us go on to the next photograph as given by Mark, "**The Servant of the Lord.**" See Zechariah 3:8, "For, behold, I will bring forth—אֶת־עֲבָדִי וְנָתַתִּי—My Servant the Branch."

It is true that God speaks of Abraham as “**My servant**,” and “**My servant Moses**,” “**My servant Caleb**,” “**My servant David**,” “**My servant Job**,” “**My servant Isaiah**,” “**My servant Eliakim**,” “**Israel My servant**,” “**Jacob My servant**,” and even “**Nebuchadnezzar My servant**,” but when He speaks of the Messiah as “**My Servant**” there is no proper name added, as in the case of those above mentioned. This “**Servant**,” the Branch of David and Branch of the Lord, stands alone. He is so high above all other servants of the Lord, that He needs no description beyond “**My Servant**.” So in Isaiah 42:1, we have, — אתמך־בו בחירי רצתה נפשי נתתי רוחי — עלִי—“**Behold, My Servant, whom I uphold, My elect, in whom My soul delighteth.**”

How beautifully this agrees with the Lord’s testimony of Jesus when He entered upon His Messianic work at His baptism, “**And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased**” (Mark 1:11).

As the Servant of the Lord He said, “**My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work**” (John 4:34).

And on the Cross, just before He expired, “**He said, It is finished**” (Ch. 19:30).

And in relation to His service for man He says, “**For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many**” (Mark 10:45).

How exactly all this harmonizes with that remarkable paragraph known as the 53rd chapter of Isaiah, in which the atoning sufferings of the Messiah are so graphically predicted, and as literally fulfilled in Jesus as if the chapter had been written after the death of Jesus instead of seven or eight hundred years before.

Have you noticed that the paragraph commences at chapter 52:13— ירום ומשא וגבה מאד הנה ישכיל — עבדִי — “**Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high.**”

Thus we have Mark’s photograph of Jesus as the Servant of the Lord, an exact likeness of the Servant of the Lord as predicted in the Old Testament.

Jew. Well, this is certainly remarkable. Let me hear about the third photograph.

Christian. Luke gives “**the Son of Man**” photograph of Jesus, and tells us (in chapter 19:10) that Jesus, speaking of Himself, says, “**For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost;**” and in chapter 22:48, Jesus said to Judas, “**Betrayest thou the Son of Man with a kiss.**”

Then when Pilate brought Jesus out for crucifixion, he said to the Jews, “**Behold the Man;**” but neither he nor the Jews appeared to know that he was uttering words that had been spoken of the Messiah some 500 years before. In Zechariah 6:12, the Lord says, — הנה־איש צמח שמו — “**Behold the Man, whose name is the BRANCH.**”

How instructive also to compare the words of Jesus in answer to the question put by the High Priest, with the words spoken by the Prophet Daniel. The High Priest asked Jesus, “**Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?**” “And Jesus said, “**I am;**” and then further said, “**And ye shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.**”

What does Daniel say? See chapter 7, verse 13, “**I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one—**כבר אֱנִשׁ—(Chaldee) **like unto a Son of Man**” who comes to establish a universal and everlasting kingdom. Very remarkable, however, it is, that this same Daniel says, in his 9th chapter, that this same Messiah was to appear and be cut off before the destruction of the City and Temple of Jerusalem.

We have now had the Son of Man photograph. Let us go on to the fourth and last, as given by John.

John gives the Son of God—the Deity of the Messiah. He says, “**In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God** (chapter 1:1). Then in verse 14 he says, “**The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us . . . full of grace and truth.**” Then in verse 17 he tells us that “**grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.**” Thus Jesus Christ was full of grace and truth, the Word made flesh, with God, and was God.

Jew. But have we in our Scriptures the word *Tsemach*, BRANCH, anywhere spoken of as the Lord?

Christian. Yes, just as clearly as in the case of the three preceding photographs. Now look at Isaiah 4:2—בְּיוֹם הַהוּא יִהְיֶה צֶמַח יְהוָה לְצַבִּי וּלְכָבוֹד—“**In that day shall the branch of the LORD be beautiful and glorious.**”

Here we have clearly the Divine nature of the Messiah, for if Branch of *David* means Son of David, then Branch of *Jehovah* means Son of God. A branch partakes of the nature of that out of which it grows. But we have the human nature of the Messiah taught also in this passage, for the two generally are found together in Messianic passages. The latter part of the same verse says, “**And the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel.**”

The fruit of the earth represents the human nature of the Messiah, so that He is Divine and human as predicted in the Old Testament, and as set forth in Jesus in the New. Further, we have the God of Israel calling the special attention of Israel to the Messiah in these four aspects. Zechariah 9:9, “**Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem:—D—Behold, thy King cometh unto thee.**”

- Then in Isaiah 13:1, “**Behold, My Servant.**”
- Then in Zechariah 6:12, “**Behold the Man.**”
- Then in Isaiah 60, “**Behold your God.**”

So you see we claim nothing for Jesus in the New Testament beyond that which was clearly predicted of the Messiah in the Old Testament.

Jew. I verily believe that if we Jews had studied our Old Testament more, and perhaps the New Testament also, and the Talmud and commentaries less, we should have been in a better position for detecting error and ascertaining truth than our people are generally at this day.

Christian. True, very true. In confirmation of what we have said about the four photographs you would do well to notice that:

*In harmony with Matthew's photograph —Messiah of the Jews, Son of David, and King of Israel—*we have a genealogy **“of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham.”** From Abraham through David, is enough for the Jew.

Now Mark's—the Servant. A servant needs no genealogy, only a character; so Mark gives him no genealogy, but His Father gives Him a character:—**“This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased.”**

Now Luke's—the Son of Man. Here we have a genealogy running up to Adam and to God. Why? Because the promise that the Redeemer should be the seed of the woman, in Genesis 3:15, was given long centuries before the promise that the Messiah should be the child of the Jewish virgin. The miraculously born Redeemer was to be a Saviour for the race, as well as a Messiah for the Jews.

Now John's—the Son of God. Here we have no human genealogy. The human origin of the Messiah is from the house of David in the town of Bethlehem, according to Micah 5:2; and in the same verse we have His Divine genealogy stated thus: **“Out of thee (Bethlehem-Judah) shall he come forth unto me that is to be—מֶלֶךְ בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל—Ruler in Israel—וּמִצֵּאתָיו מִקֶּדֶם מִיָּמֵי עוֹלָם—**
Whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting.”

Jew. It seems to me this entire question needs and deserves a thorough re-examination by our people.

Christian. It does, and if examined with an honest mind and humble heart, and in a prayerful spirit, the truth will be found to be, as Paul, a learned Jew, has stated it, as to the twofold nature of the Messiah, Jesus.

Speaking in Romans 1:2 of the Gospel, or good news, of God, **“promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures, concerning His Son;”** he declares that this Son **“which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh,”** but who also **“declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness by the resurrection of the dead.”**

A human body was needed, but a sinless one, in order to atone for sin by the shedding of blood; a Divine Saviour was needed to give infinite value to the sacrifice.

By virtue of His atoning death for Jews and Gentiles, “**the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins.**” Millions have found this blessedly true. Jesus says, “**I am the way, the truth, and the life.**”

“Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out.”

~ end of chapter 15 ~

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“ISRAEL MY GLORY”

Israel’s Mission, and Missions to Israel

by

John Wilkinson

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CHAPTER SIXTEEN

GENEALOGY

TRACTS FOR JEWS NUMBER 5

Jesus Christ, the Son of David

Jew. Our Messiah, when He comes, will certainly be of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Judah, and also of the house and family of David. I have read Matthew’s genealogy of Jesus, but I cannot make out that Jesus is David’s seed. The genealogy begins all right with Abraham, is continued through David and Solomon right down to Joseph, the husband of Mary. But Joseph was not the father of Jesus even according to the New Testament, so how could Jesus be of the seed of David?

Granting that Joseph was a direct descendant of David, Joseph was no more the father of Jesus than was any ordinary Jew, so the genealogy of Matthew fails to convince a Jew that Jesus was a son of David. Our Psalms state that **“the Lord hath sworn in truth unto David . . . Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne,”** and who can say that Jesus was the fruit of David’s body through Joseph.

And further, if Jesus had been the Son of Joseph, and thus the Son of David, He would have had no right to the throne of David, for Jeconiah is in the genealogy, and none of his seed can ever sit on the throne of David.

Jeremiah 22:30 says distinctly of Jeconiah, **“Thus saith the LORD, Write ye this man childless, a man that shall not prosper in his days: for no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah.”**

Don’t you see that we Jews have a good case against the Messiahship of Jesus on two counts:

1st. He must be a direct descendant of David;

2nd, He must have a clear right to the throne of David. — נשבע ייחוד לדוד אמת לא־ישוב ממנה מפרי בטן — אשית לבסא־לך — **“the Lord hath sworn in truth unto David . . . Of the fruit of thy body will I**

set upon thy throne.” Jesus was not the fruit of David’s body through Joseph, and besides, no descendant of Jeconiah can occupy David’s throne.

Christian. I have listened to your statement not only with patience, but also with sympathetic interest. Your case is strong and clear as far as it goes. I take it that you honestly wish to know the truth on this momentous question, and that if these difficulties can be fairly and candidly met, you will in the interest of truth accept their solution.

Jew. It seems to me impossible to solve such difficulties. Our Hebrew Scriptures predict the advent of a Messiah who should be of David’s seed, and possess a right to David’s throne; and according to Matthew’s genealogy Jesus was not of David’s seed, and had no title to David’s throne. I am interested to know how the Christians explain these difficulties. Please tell me.

Christian. We Christians willingly admit, for it is simple truth, that Jesus was not the seed of David through Joseph, and also that Jeconiah barred the way to David’s throne. Nevertheless it can be as clearly shown that Jesus was a real descendant of David, and has a valid claim to David’s throne; and further, He is the only Person alive now as known to be of David’s seed, and as possessing a right to David’s throne.

Jew. Well, that is new to me, do let me hear what can be said.

Christian. In the first place the Messiah was to be the seed of the woman—זרע—her seed (Genesis 3:15); —זרע—seed, being always applied to the male of man and of beast, with this one exception, we have plainly intimated the miraculous birth of a Deliverer, who was to be a Saviour for the RACE, as well as the Messiah of the Jews. Thus we have Luke, an inspired physician, employed to write a genealogy of Jesus that goes beyond Abraham, up to Adam, and to God.

After the call of Abraham it was made clear that the blessing of all nations was to come through his seed, not through Ishmael, but through Isaac.

Isaac was the child of miracle, and thus typified the miraculous birth of the Messiah, who, according to Isaiah 7:14, was to be the child of a pure Jewish virgin—הנה העלמה הרה וילדת בן—
“Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a Son.”

Now it is very clear that if the Messiah was to be miraculously born of a virgin he could not possibly have a human father; and it is equally clear that the virgin must not only be a Jewess, but also in the direct line of David: that is, she must come out of the loins of David.

Jesus could not have been Joseph’s son without falsifying prophecy, even though being Joseph’s child He would have been David’s seed.

The Scripture must be fulfilled at all cost, so the Messiah must be born of a Jewish virgin without the intervention of a human father.

Now, what follows? Why, that two genealogies are absolutely necessary; one to show the literal fulfillment of prophecy in the miraculous birth of the Messiah from a Jewish virgin, and also as coming from the loins of David; and the other as setting forth the line to the throne of David, and how to reach it.

Jew. I see very plainly that if the Messiah was to be miraculously born of a virgin, and our Scriptures say so, then to have a human father would destroy any claim to be the Messiah, to say nothing of Jeconiah barring the way to David's throne. It seems a matter of necessity that the mother of the Messiah should be a true descendant of David. Is this so?

Christian. Yes, undoubtedly. Luke gives the genealogy of the Virgin Mary, the mother of Jesus. She was the daughter of Heli, who became the father-in-law of Joseph; Joseph's natural father being Jacob.

Now we shall not only get our difficulties solved, but we shall see how wonderfully God has fenced round the interests of Prophecy and the claim to David's throne.

Nathan was a son of David as well as Solomon, and Nathan is at the head of Mary's genealogy as a descendant of David, as Solomon is at the head of Joseph's. Joseph and Mary are both descendants of David. Joseph is in both the natural and regal line, and Mary in the natural line only.

Jew. But the virgin Mary's name is not mentioned in the genealogy of Luke, so how can you prove even from the New Testament that Mary was really of the seed of David?

Christian. We have two genealogies, two only; one is certainly Joseph's through Solomon, the other as certainly belongs to someone else through Nathan; just as the Prince of Wales is at the head of one line, and the Duke of Edinburgh the head of another, though both children of Queen Victoria. So, then, as Joseph could not be the father of Jesus without falsifying prophecy, we need another genealogy, and as only *one other person* is vitally concerned in the matter, inference is quite as good as a name.

A little boy said one morning to a schoolfellow, "We have another child in our house this morning." The schoolfellow asked, "A boy or a girl." The little fellow said, "Guess." "A boy." "No, guess again." He had no need to guess again, he could safely infer.

Now let us see what evidence we have of Mary's descent from King David. Turn to the 1st chapter of Luke's Gospel, and read verses 26 to 35.

"And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be.

“And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him *the throne of his father David*: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.”

Now all this is so simple, so natural and so beautiful, that it seems to meet all the reasonable demands of those who are looking for a Messiah according to Old Testament prophecy.

Jew. Even should all this be historically true, how does it prove Mary to be of the seed of David?

Christian. The Angel Gabriel, who was sent from God, would certainly know that the child to be born of the Virgin Mary would have no human father, but would be miraculously produced by the power of the Holy Spirit, fulfilling exactly the words of the 2nd Psalm—בני אתה אני היום ילדתיך—**“Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee;”** and you see the Angel said to the virgin, **the Lord God shall give unto him *the throne of his father David*.** The Virgin Mary must therefore have been in David’s line. Mark well, the Angel does not say, “The Lord God will give Him the throne of David,” but, ***“the throne of his father David.”***

Jew. But I have another difficulty; it is this, the right to David’s throne was not in the line of Nathan, even though Nathan was a son of David. The right to David’s throne was in the line of Solomon, just as the British throne is not in the line of the Duke of Edinburgh, but in that of the Prince of Wales. Thus while Joseph and Jeconiah bar the way to the throne of David in Matthew’s genealogy, the way to the throne is also barred in Luke’s genealogy by Jesus being born out of the royal line, even granting that the virgin Mary was of David’s seed. Now tell me how you establish the right of Jesus to the throne of David.

Christian. This is also very simple. Put two or three things together. Joseph had a right to David’s throne as being in the royal line, but even he could not occupy the throne which was barred against him by Jeconiah. And then Jesus was not, and could not be, Joseph’s son. The Messiah must be the child of a virgin, and of David’s seed. Jesus was the son of a virgin of David’s seed. Jesus was the son of a virgin, but not in the royal line from Solomon.

Now how is the difficulty solved? Simply by a *marriage* between Joseph and the Virgin mother of the Messiah. Thus Jesus has a right to the throne through Joseph, and is eligible to sit on that throne as David’s son through Mary. By that marriage Jesus escapes the two barriers in the genealogy of Matthew, and walks over the one barrier in the genealogy of Luke.

The two genealogies were necessary. It was necessary that both Joseph and Mary should be of David’s seed. The marriage between Joseph and Mary was also necessary. So you see that the interests of prophecy and the right to David’s throne have been most carefully protected by the Divine hand.

Jew. You must be patient with me, and not call me stupid, and stubborn, and blind, as some Christians do. I have not got all my difficulties on this subject settled yet. Jesus has never sat on the throne of David.

God says in Psalm 89, **“I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant: Thy seed will I establish for ever—וּבְנֵי לְדָוִד בְּסֶאֶךְ—and build up thy throne to all generations. Selah.”**

“His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me.” And even the New Testament represents Gabriel as telling the Virgin Mary respecting the child to be born, that **“the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David.”** Now Jesus has never had that throne. How is this explained?

Christian. The true Messiah must first of all fulfil Scripture. The Scriptures say that Messiah must reach His glorious reign through atoning suffering; He must reach the throne by way of the Cross. Speaking of the Messiah in Isaiah 53:10, the Prophet says, **“When Thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.”**

Now a sin offering must be slain before it atoned for sin. The seed then comes after death, which can only mean disciples and not natural seed. And days can be prolonged after death only by resurrection. Messiah’s death in form was to be by crucifixion, as predicted in Psalm 22:16, **“They pierced My hands and My feet.”** Then according to Psalm 16:10, the Messiah’s soul was not to be left in hell (Sheol), and further, **“Neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.”** Jesus died and rose again. He died for our sins and rose again for (on account of) our justification. He is now at the right hand of the Father according to the 110th Psalm, and will return in glory, according to Daniel 7:13, on the clouds of heaven, to set up His Kingdom which shall never be destroyed.

The genealogies of Matthew and Luke harmonize beautifully with the teachings of Old Testament Scripture respecting the Messiah as the Son of David and the Son of God.

Genealogies, amongst the Jews are now entirely lost, so that the Jews are now shut up to Jesus as Messiah or none. Don’t despair, listen to your brother Paul, **“declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again . . . And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David.”** Jesus was born King of the Jews, died King of the Jews, and will return by and by as the acknowledged King of the Jews.

~ end of chapter 16 ~

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CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

PASSOVER

TRACTS FOR JEWS NUMBER 6

פסח הוא ליהוה

It is the Lord’s Passover

Jew. We Jews must all keep Pesach, and we must always keep Pesach. The God of Israel says, **“And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the LORD throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever. Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread—מצות—*Matzoth*; even the first day ye shall put away leaven—Seor, out of your houses: for whosoever eateth leavened bread—שאר—*Chometz*, from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel”** (Exodus 12:14, 15).

The Christians do not keep Pesach, so Jews must not become Christians.

Christian. If the Jews did everything that God told them to do, neither more nor less, then the Christians must either deny the inspiration of the Old Testament Scriptures, or leave the Jews alone; but as the Jews do not keep Pesach according to God’s ordinance, and are thus in danger of the penalties of disobedience, the earnest Christians dare not leave the Jews alone.

Jew. What do the Christians mean when they say the Jews do not keep Pesach? All true Jews keep Pesach every year throughout the whole world.

Christian. Excuse me, they do not. No Jew keeps Pesach. The Jews keep—*Chag Ammatsoth* — the feast of unleavened bread. That is true. But the feast of the passover, no Jew keeps.

Jew. Please make plain what you mean.

Christian. The putting away leaven, keeping holiday, and eating *matsoth* for seven days, is not keeping Pesach, it is only keeping the feast of unleavened bread. If you had a mutton pie for dinner with the mutton left out, would you say you had dined off mutton pie? It was the lamb that made the Passover.

“And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you. Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying—*ישׂאל לאמר בעשר לחדש הזה ויקחו להם איש־שה*—*לכית־אבת־שה*—In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house: And if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbour next unto his house take it according to the number of the souls; every man according to his eating shall make your count for the lamb. Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year . . . And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening (*between the evenings*). And they shall take of the *blood*, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door posts of the houses, *wherein* they shall eat it: And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it . . . And thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste—*פסח הוא ליהודה*—it is the Lord’s passover. For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast . . . And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you” (Exodus 12:1-13).

Here you see plainly that the Pesach consisted of roast lamb, to be eaten inside the houses, on whose two side posts and lintel had been put the blood of the Passover lamb.

Jew. I see the feast of the Passover is one thing, and the feast of Matzoth—unleavened bread—is another; but we Jews think the lamb was only for Egypt, whilst the feast of Matzoth was for all time.

Christian. That is quite a mistake. Moses said to the elders of Israel, “**Draw out and take ye a lamb . . . and kill the passover. And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the bason, and strike the lintel and the two side posts with the blood that is in the bason; and none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning. For the Lord will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when He seeth the Mood upon the lintel, and on the two side posts, the Lord will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you. And ye shall observe this thing for an ordinance to thee and to thy sons for ever.**”

Now you see that this ordinance of the passover is as binding upon the Jews as is the feast of Matzoth, for of the Pesach it is commanded—“**Ye shall observe this thing for an ordinance to thee and to thy sons for ever**” (Exodus 12:21-24)

If any service we render to God is to be accepted by God, that service must be rendered in exact accordance with Divine instructions. We must not add to or take from any of God’s commands.

Jew. What have we changed in the feast of Matzoth, unleavened bread? Don’t we carefully put away *Seor*, leaven?

Christian. The Passover prayers direct the Jew to search for leaven on the evening before the 14th of Nisan, before the coming out of the stars, and by the light of a single wax taper, and neither to work, eat, nor study when the time draws near. When he has searched well if he see a mouse come into the house with leaven in its mouth, the Jew must search again until he find the bread. But if a mouse enter the house with bread, and a mouse go out with bread, he may infer it is the same mouse, and need not search; but if the one entering be a black mouse, and the one going out a white one, a search is necessary. If a mouse entered with bread and a weasel went out with bread, a search is necessary. If a mouse and a weasel both go out, and bread in the weasel's mouth, no search is needed; the bread may be regarded as having been brought in by the mouse.

Now, everyone, Jew and Christian, knows well that all this has no foundation in the Word of God. This is purely human invention and addition, and cannot be pleasing to the infinitely wise God. Besides, we need not remind you that the mock sales to Gentiles effected by Jews whose business is to deal in leaven, pretending to sell their property during passover time, are tricks which a Holy God could never sanction, and have an unfavorable influence on character.

Jew. These things, I must confess, don't look well, and I feel half ashamed of them when exposed; but, you see, we are accustomed to them, and so they seem to come natural. What about the Passover?

Christian. Worse still! There is no Passover at all! There are on the festive board, besides the Passover cakes:

ביצה Egg ;	מרור Bitter herbs ;	זרוע Shankbone ;
חרוסת Charoseth ; (Memorial of lime and mortar.)		חזרת Lettuce ;
מי מלח Salt Water ;		כרפס Chervil and Parsley.

We are told in the Jewish prayers that the shank bone of a shoulder of lamb and the egg are both to be roasted with fire. The former a memorial of Pesach, and the latter of the festive sacrifice.

Now we ask you seriously, are you sure that God is as well pleased with your way of observing Pesach as with His own way? Who has a right to substitute a shank bone and an egg for God's lamb? God says a lamb. Now, we have nothing to say about the bitter herbs, the salt water, or the mixture of almonds, apples, and other fruit, reminding of the lime and mortar of Egypt; but we must call attention to the shank bone and the egg. The Lord's Passover provides a lamb to be roasted and eaten by the obedient Jew, and the blood of that lamb to shelter from death. The Jew's Passover provides a shank bone with no meat to eat, and an egg with no blood to shelter from death.

Jew. But do you mean to say we Jews commit sin against God by keeping Pesach as we do?

Christian. Well, hear what God Himself says:—“**But the man that is clean, and is not on a journey, and forbearth to keep the Passover, even the same soul shall be cut off from among his people: because he brought not the offering of the Lord—קרבן יהוה—corban Yehovah—in his appointed season, that man shall bear his sin.**” (Numbers 9:13).

It is not enough to put away leaven, to eat Matzoth, in the proper season. God says, if the Jew bring not the—קרבן יהוה—offering of the Lord, the lamb, he shall bear his sin.

This is a serious matter, and must not be trifled with. Suppose your fathers in Egypt had said, “Let us have roast eggs and shank bones instead of the lambs, killing lambs may offend the Egyptians; and let us put passover cakes on the door posts instead of blood; feeding on roast lamb may be very well, but a preservation from death based on blood we cannot see, and do not think necessary.” What would have been the result of such a course of conduct? Would not every Jew’s house have been visited with death? And if the disobedient Jew could not escape sin and death then, how can he expect to escape now? It must be the Lord’s *Corban*, offering, or it is no offering at all. It must be the Lord’s *Pesach*, Passover, or it is no Passover at all. It must be the *Zebach*, sacrifice of the Lord’s Passover, or it is no sacrifice at all.

Jew. I’m afraid our rabbis have led us astray, and we have just followed man’s devices instead of God’s Word, and so we are all in the dark together. It seems we do not keep the passover at all, certainly not in God’s way; we only keep the feast of Matzoth—unleavened bread. But why do you call the Passover lamb a sacrifice?

Christian. Because God calls it a sacrifice. Look at verses 26 and 27 of Exodus 12, “**When your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service? That ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the Lord’s passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when He smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses.**”

There was no sacrificial blood on the door posts of the Egyptians, so we are told “**there was not a house among them in which there was not one dead.**” There was sacrificial blood on the door posts of the Israelites, so there was no house among them in which there was one dead. It was either a dead lamb with sheltering blood, and a living firstborn; or a living lamb, with no sheltering blood, and a dead firstborn.

Thousands of tons of Matzoth, passover cakes, piled on a Jew’s house, would not have preserved from death one firstborn with no sheltering blood on the door posts.

Jew. Blood has no place in our religion now; our rabbis tell us that sacrifices are not needed now. God does not require blood. We have become too enlightened to need sacrificial blood as a basis of religion.

Christian. There are many so-called Christians who think just the same. They don’t like the doctrine of the blood.

But, let us remember, it is not what the Jew or the Christian thinks wise and proper, but just simply and solely what God says. God told the Jews to kill the lamb, roast it, feed on it, and put its blood on the door posts and lintel, and then they would be safe. They did as God commanded them, and were quite safe. Now if the family had been outside the house with blood on the door, and even looking at the blood, would they have been safe?

Jew. No, certainly not; death would have reached them, for they must be inside to be safe.

Christian. If the Jewish family had been inside the house with no blood on the door, would they have been safe?

Jew. No, certainly not, death would have reached them inside with no blood outside, just as it would have reached them outside though blood were on the door. The blood must be outside, and the family inside, or the Jewish firstborn would have been slain as well as the firstborn of the Egyptians.

Christian. We have some of our own people called Christians who just believe the historic fact that a person called Jesus died on a cross outside Jerusalem, nearly nineteen centuries ago, but they don't trust in that death as an atonement for their sins, and so are not benefited by that death. They are like the Jews outside the house though blood is on the door. Others are like the Jews inside the house with no blood on the door: they are members of Christian Churches, but don't believe in the doctrine of the blood.

These so-called Christians, whether inside the Church without the sheltering blood, or outside with the blood shed but not trusted, are in the same danger of death eternal, as the Jews, in similar circumstances, were in danger of death physical. It is not safe for a sinner, Jew or Gentile, to hold a different opinion about the way of salvation from that which God has declared in His Word. God says—כִּי־דָם הוּא בִּנְפֶשׁ יִכַּפֵּר—**“For it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul”** (Leviticus 17:11).

Jew. The Christians do not keep Pesach either, so where is their Passover lamb to feed upon, and blood to shelter them?

Christian. Your Passover lamb, as well as all the sacrifices under the Jewish law, was a type of the Messiah, God's Lamb, of whom it is said in Isaiah 53:7 —כִּשְׁחָ לַשֹּׁחֵט יֵבֶל—**“He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter.”**

The roasting of the lamb typified the sufferings of the Messiah, so now the soul that trusts in the atoning work of the Lord Jesus Christ feeds by faith on that atoning work, whilst sheltered from destruction by the atoning blood. The essentials of Mosaism and of Christianity are exactly the same, and the Jew who trusts in Jesus is the true Jew, and can sing with his brother Paul, a learned and religious Jew: **“For even Christ, our Passover, is sacrificed for us; therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.”**

“The—זֶאֵר—*seor*, **leaven**, represents malice and wickedness, which must be put away; and—מַצוֹת—*Matzoth, unleavened bread*, represents sincerity and truth, which should always be practiced.

It is possible to put away leaven and still be full of malice and wickedness; as it is possible to eat Matzoth without being sincere or truthful. The old original Passover is not kept to-day by eating Matzoth, neither can the true Passover be kept now but by trusting in the atoning blood of Christ, the true Passover Lamb.

Listen, O listen, to one of your own nation, crying to the Jews while pointing to Jesus, “**Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world**” (I Corinthians 5:7, 8).

~ end of chapter 17 ~

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by

John Wilkinson

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CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

ATONEMENT

TRACTS FOR JEWS NUMBER 7

יום הכפרים

Day of Atonements

Jew. All true Jews regard “*Yom Kippur*” as the most solemn day in the whole year. We fast, we pray, we weep, and give alms in order to find forgiveness of our sins. Our Rabbis tell us that sacrifices are not necessary now, but that God will accept almsgiving, prayers and fasting instead.

Christian. We know that your “*Yom Kippur*” is a most solemn day, and instead of ridiculing your observances as superstitious, many true Christians, on your account, feel as much pain on that day as do the Jews.

Jew. Do any Christians feel pain on our account? Why so?

Christian. Because they know, on the clearest testimony of Holy Scripture, that if the God of Israel changes not—and He says—אני יהוה לא שניתי—“**I am the Lord, I change not;**” the praying, fasting, weeping Jews can have no forgiveness on *Yom Kippur*, except on the ground of atoning blood; for God says—כִּי־דָם הוּא בִּנְפֶשׁ יִכְפֹּר—“**For it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul**” (Leviticus 17:11), and to show that this is not one way of forgiveness amongst others, but the only way, God says by another Jew: “**Without shedding of blood is no remission**” (Hebrews 9:22).

The Jews have now no atoning blood, and consequently no forgiveness of sins.

Jew. Our learned men are telling us now that the slaughter of animals in sacrifice was a heathen custom, and that as a matter of policy this custom was adopted by the Mosaic law as a temporary expedient, to prevent the Israelites from sacrificing to the heathen deities; but that now the idea of the sacrifice of animals is contrary to the spirit of the age we live in.

Christian. Surely it is most dishonoring to God to suppose that He would adopt a policy of expediency by adopting heathen rites into the Mosaic law; besides, we must remember that the sacrifices under the Mosaic law did not preserve the Jews from idolatry, for both the kingdoms of Israel and Judah fell into gross idolatry which banished them from their country. We Christians believe that those Jews are right who hold that the sacrifices were for a temporary purpose.

Jew. Well, then, you would not encourage us to pray for the restoration of sacrifices, but you would take sides with those reform Jews who say we have become too enlightened to need sacrifice. How then do you suppose we shall get the forgiveness of our sins?

Christian. The best way both for Jew and Christian is first to hear what God has to say on this matter. Let us go back to the observance of *Yom Kippur* in ancient times, and see what were the instructions given by God when He instituted the day's observances.

Let us look for a moment at the meaning of the root word—כפר—from which Kippur is derived.

It is translated commonly, yea more than sixty times, by the word **atonement**, also by the word *expiation, purge, reconcile, reconciliation, reconciling, pacified, appease, pardon, forgive, cleanse*. These words plainly testify that Kippur has to do with some transaction between God and man, by means of which reconciliation is effected on the basis of atonement for sin, the claims of God's holiness and law fully met, and the sinner's forgiveness and cleansing honorably provided for.

The fullest instructions for the observances of this day are given in the 16th chapter of Leviticus.

Here the Lord speaks to Moses, and instructs him to tell his brother Aaron when and where and how he is to serve during that day. Leviticus 23:27 also specifies the day as the tenth of the seventh month (*Tishri*). Rest from work, affliction of soul and sacrifice are strictly enjoined—none may be neglected without peril.

On this one day only of the whole year may Aaron enter the Holy of Holies within the vail, where he first takes the blood of the bullock as the atonement for himself and for the priestly house, sprinkles it once on—הכפרת—the *mercy seat* eastward, and before the mercy seat seven times.

Then he must kill the goat of the sin offering, that is for the people and present its blood in the same place and in the same manner as he had presented the blood of the bullock. Then he takes the live goat, lays both his hands on its head, confesses over it all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat and sending him away. God speaks to Moses. Moses tells Aaron exactly what God says. Aaron does exactly what God tells him by Moses. The atonement for sin is made and the people and priests are forgiven. This is plainly God's way of atoning for sin and of forgiving the sinner.

Jew. Our Rabbis and learned men tell us what to believe and what to do.

- Some tell us that sacrifices never had atoning value, but were expressive only of dependence on God, and of gratitude to God.
- Some say they were to give employment and a livelihood to the priesthood.
- Others say the day itself atones for sin.
- Others tell us that the blood wasted in the body by fasting atones for sin.
- And others that the slaughter of a fowl on the eve of *Yom Kippur* will atone for sin.

Many of us are much perplexed as to what is the truth.

Christian. This is most perplexing and unsatisfactory. We are in God's hands. We have sinned against God. God is angry with the wicked every day.

- God says, "**All have sinned.**"
- God says, "**The soul that sinneth, it shall die.**"
- God says, "**Death is the penalty of sin.**"
- God says, "**The life is in the blood.**"
- God says, "**It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.**"

Not the blood of the sinner wasted by fasting. Not the blood of the fowl killed by many Jews on *erev Yom Kippur* (*eve of the day of atonement*). These sacrifices would have atoned for sin if God had appointed them, but He has not, and so they are useless.

The day itself has no more virtue than any other day to atone for sin. The Passover without a lamb is no Passover. The Lord's Passover provided sheltering blood, and a lamb on which to feed. Now the Jews have unleavened bread only. The annual atonement provided by God was the bullock's blood for the priestly house, and the goat's blood for the congregation of Israel. Had Aaron observed the day by repentance, fasting, weeping, prayer, only, and thus entered the Holy of Holies on *Yom Kippur*, he would have been killed dead on the spot. And can a Jew hope to be saved where Aaron would have been killed?

Jew. But the Christians do not offer sacrifices, and they profess to know their sins forgiven; why should not we Jews get forgiveness without sacrifice? If sacrifices are necessary for us, why not for them?

Christian. There is no respect of persons with God. Jews and Gentiles have all sinned. God elects the Jewish nation to learn, and then teach His way of salvation. In their Tabernacle and Temple the daily and yearly sacrifices teach about sin, atonement and forgiveness.

Either the sinner must die for his own sin, or a substitute provided by God. The substitute must not be a sinner, so God provides bullocks, lambs and goats. God shows His displeasure against sin by the death of the innocent victim; and at the same time He shows His love to the sinner by appointing a substitute.

These sacrifices were to be offered only by the Jews, not by the Gentiles. The Jews were to be a blessing to the world, but the world would not and could not practice the Jews' religion of sacrifices.

The 110th Psalm teaches a change of Priesthood—על־דברתי מלכ־צדק—after the order of Melchizedek.

If a change of priesthood there must be a change also of the law of sacrifices. That priesthood is the priesthood of the Messiah. The sacrifices all pointed to Him. The sacrifices of bullocks, lambs and goats were not worth as much as a man, so they had to be offered over and over again, day after day, and year after year, for many centuries, till the Jews had well learned their lesson—that God’s way of saving a sinner is, atonement by blood, the innocent dying for the guilty.

The sacrifices having served their purpose as picturing the sacrifice of Messiah, whose one voluntary sacrifice gave full meaning and a termination to the Mosaic sacrifices, and thus perpetuated the doctrine of atonement by blood to the end of the world. Like the Jewish sacrifices, the Messiah must be without sin, and must die instead of the sinner. Besides, He must be a Divine Person, that His sacrifice may avail for all sinners and for all time—indeed He must be—מלאך יהוה— **“Angel of the Lord,”** and יהוה צדקנו **“the Lord our righteousness.”**

The sinlessness of the Lord Jesus Christ qualifies Him to take the sinner’s place; and His Divinity gives infinite value to His sacrifice.

Jew. Then do you mean to say that the repentance, fasting, praying, and almsgiving of the Jews will not avail for the pardon of their sins?

Christian. Certainly they will not. We must go by what God says. Your forefathers who offered sacrifices in obedience to God knew their sins forgiven on the testimony of God. When Jesus offered Himself as a sacrifice on the cross, then all Jews who wished to have their sins forgiven, trusted in His atonement and got forgiveness. God then swept away the sacrifices of the Mosaic law as done with, so that Jews and Gentiles alike might have salvation through the one atonement made by Jesus on the cross;—והוא מחלל מפשענו מדבא מעונתינו מוסר שלומנו עליו ובחברתו

—נרפא־לנו **“He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities . the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed”** (Isaiah 53:5)
—כלנו כצאן תעינו איש לדרכו פנינו ויהוה הפגיע בו את עין כלנו **“All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all”** (Isaiah 53:6).

Christ is now the true atonement, and there is no other. Read the ninth chapter of the inspired letter to the Hebrews written by a Jew, and you will get further light.

“The priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people: The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience;

“Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation. But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?” (Hebrews 9:6-14).

Jew. Do you mean us to understand that we Jews must either observe the ceremonies given by God to Moses, in order to get forgiveness of our sins, or else we must accept Christ as our Messiah, and His death as our atonement?

Christian. We dare not keep back the truth. You must do one or the other. But since you cannot do the former, and they would avail nothing if you could, for they are abolished, you can now be saved only by the atoning work of Christ. He took our place that we might take His. He was treated, willingly, as we deserved to be treated, that we might be treated as He deserved to be treated. He was treated as though He had committed all the sinner's sins; that we, trusting in Him, might be treated, as though we had practiced all His righteousness. Indeed, **“He, who knew no sin, was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.”**

Jew. If all this be true, then the Christian religion is more like the religion of Moses than is our present Jewish religion.

Christian. And so it is. You have changed Mosaism, based on atoning blood, for Rabbinism which glories in the absence of atoning blood.

Is it wise, is it safe, to trust in what man says instead of what God says? God says, **“It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.”** The believing Jew and the believing Gentile say of Jesus **“In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.”** **“The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.”**

This is God's way, there is no other—accept it and be saved for ever; or reject it, or neglect it, and be lost forever. **“Why will ye die, O house of Israel.”** **“The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”** **“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.”**

~ end of chapter 18 ~

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“ISRAEL MY GLORY”

Israel's Mission, and Missions to Israel

by

John Wilkinson

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CHAPTER NINETEEN

QUESTIONS ON MESSIANIC PASSAGES PUT BY CHRISTIANS TO JEWS

The foregoing pages solve the main doctrinal difficulties of the Jew by a reference to the teaching of the Old Testament Scriptures. There is no doctrine vital to Christianity but may be proved from the Jewish Hebrew Scriptures. The conversational style has been adopted to make the matter simple and attractive to the Jew, and also to help the ordinary Christian to deal with the Jew who honestly wishes a solution of his difficulties, and desires to know the truth. Beyond this God has graciously been pleased already to bless these brief papers to the removal of Christian doubts and to the strengthening of Christian faith.

A moderate acquaintance with the Old Testament Scriptures ought to qualify any Christian to meet the Jew on his own ground, and to convince him that, to be consistent, he must either deny the inspiration of the Scriptures or believe in the Messiahship of Jesus.

Our risen Lord expounded Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Himself.

Besides the form of apparent attack upon the Jew by directly proving the Messiahship of Jesus, and by confounding him, excite him to anger and even blasphemy, there is another, though apparently indirect, yet very effective way of presenting the truth to the Jew, and that is by asking questions.

Our blessed Lord heard the Jews, and asked them questions. There is great wisdom in asking profitable questions; and besides, the interrogator voluntarily puts himself under obligation to the interrogated.

The Jews are themselves very fond of asking questions, and they should be encouraged to do it, and should not be ridiculed when they ask even frivolous ones. Our blessed Lord set people thinking by the thoughtful and infinitely wise questions He was continually asking. These questions raised difficulties in the mind which led to reasoning and disputing among disciples, Scribes and Pharisees, and the people generally, and also to a shower of questions from all sorts of people to the Lord Jesus Himself.

Take for example a few asked by the Lord Himself.

- **“Whom do men say that I the Son of Man am?”** (Mark 16:13).
- **“Whom say ye that I am”** (Mark 16:15).
- **“What thinkest thou Simon”** (Matthew 17:25).
- **“Of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute”** (Matthew 17:25).
- **“How long shall I be with you”** (Matthew 17:17; Mark 9:19; Luke 9:41).
- **“How long shall I suffer you”** (Matthew 17:17; Mark 9:19; Luke 9:41).
- **“What went ye out into the wilderness to see?”** (Matthew 11:7; Luke 7:24)
- **“How can Satan cast out Satan”** (Mark 3:23).
- **“Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of”** (Matthew 20:22).
- **“What will ye that I shall do unto you”** (Matthew 20:32).
- **“The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven or of men”** (Matthew 21:25).
- **“What think ye of Christ? Whose son is He”** (Matthew 22:42).
- **“If David then call Him Lord, how is He his son”** (Matthew 22:45).
- **“Whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold”** (Matthew 23:17).
- **“Friend, wherefore art thou come?”** (Matthew 26:50)
- **“Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He shall presently give Me more than twelve legions of angels?”** (Matthew 26:53)
- **“Why are ye so fearful? How is it that ye have no faith”** (Mark 4:40).
- **“Lovest thou Me”** (John 21:15, 16, 17).
- **“What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul”** (Mark 8:26, 37).
- **“What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk and are sad”** (Luke 24:17).
- **“Why are ye troubled? And why do thoughts arise in your hearts”** (Luke 24:38).
- **“Have ye here any meat”** (Luke 24:41).
- **“Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory”** (Luke 24:26).

Now take, for example, a few asked by all sorts of people of the Lord Jesus Himself.

- **“Why then say the Scribes that Elias must first come”** (Matthew 17:10).
- **“How can these things be”** (John 3:9).
- **“Why could not we cast him out”** (Matthew 17:9; Mark 9:28).
- **“Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath days”** (Matthew 12:10).
- **“Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but Thy disciples fast not?”** (Matthew 9:14)
- **“Why speakest Thou unto them in parables”** (Matthew 13:10).
- **“How oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times”** (Matthew 18:21).
- **“What sign shewest Thou then . . . What dost Thou work”** (John 6:30).
- **“Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause”** (Matthew 19:3).
- **“Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life”** (Matthew 19:16).
- **“By what authority doest Thou these things? And who gave Thee this authority”** (Matthew 27:23).
- **“What is it which these witness against Thee”** (Matthew 26:62; Mark 14:60).
- **“Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands?”** (Mark 7:5)

- **“Art Thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed”** (Mark 14:61).
- **“Wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel”** (Acts 1:6).

The immediate contexts of all these questions are full of precious truth and Divine instruction. To give even a brief exposition of them, with the practical lessons they suggest, would fill a moderately-sized volume. But this is not our object here; our object is simply to show any ordinary fellow Christian that the attention and interest of the Jews in the person and work of Christ may be secured effectually by “hearing them, and asking them questions.”

Some of the questions put by our Lord to the Jews of His day are equally suitable to the Jews of our own time; such as, **“What think ye of Christ? Whose son is He.”** and if the Jew reply, as likely he will, “He must be the son of David,” then another question naturally follows—**“If David then call Him Lord, how is He his son.”**

So also we find many of the questions put by the Jews to our Lord reproduced in every variety of form at the present day in missionary work amongst them. Should a Jew ask a question that implies culpable ignorance, don’t laugh at him, but learn to **“have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way.”** Should he ask a foolish question, give him such a discreet and wise answer as shall make him ashamed of his foolishness. The difficulties of an honest enquirer, if a thoughtful and true Jew, are many, and must be fairly, kindly, and patiently met by passages of Scripture, and by arguments and illustrations, taken as much as possible from the Old Testament alone.

Take a few plain Messianic predictions from the Old Testament and ask the Jew simple questions upon them.

- Is not the Messiah first promised as the seed of the woman?
- Have we not here an intimation of the Messiah’s miraculous birth?
- Is there another passage in the entire Bible where—**זרע**—seed, is applied to woman?
- Is, it not always elsewhere applied to the male both of man and beast?
- Then why object to a Divine Son from a human mother?
- Does not Isaiah predict just such a Messiah when he says, **“Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel”**? (Isaiah 7:14)
- Is not this to be fulfilled in the event of a male child born of a pure Jewish virgin, and who is at the same time—Immanuel—God with us?
- Besides, is not the superhuman character of the Messiah hinted at in the ability of the promised seed of the woman to defeat and crush the power of the tempter, the Devil?
- Did not Adam and Eve, though stronger than we are, fail under the power of Satan’s temptation?
- Did not Jesus successfully resist and overcome the Devil in His temptation?
- Was not Jesus manifested to destroy the works of the Devil?
- Is Jesus not pledged through death to **“destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the Devil”**? (Hebrews 2:14).

Why then should not Jesus be accepted as the Seed of the woman, the Conqueror of Satan, the Messiah promised to the Jews, and the Lifter-up of poor fallen humanity?

Should the Jew object to the miraculous in the conception of Christ, as he frequently does, then ask him such questions as the following:

- Are not your sacred Scriptures full of the miraculous?
- Was not your nation born in miracle?
- Has not your history been full of miracle?
- Is not your very existence at the present day a miracle?
- Did not Adam and Eve come into existence by miracle?
- Was not Isaac a child of miracle?
- Ought not the Jew to be the last person in the world to object to anything on the ground of its being miraculous?
- Besides, should not God's Word settle everything?
- If God's Word teaches us to expect a Messiah just like Jesus, and it does, why not accept Jesus as God's promised one?

Now let us consider the true meaning of, and ask a few questions upon, another Old Testament prediction, acknowledged by ancient Jewish writers to be Messianic. **"The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the obedience of the peoples be"** (Genesis 49:10).

As we write to help ordinary Christians and not simply for the benefit of scholars, we refrain from giving the varied translations and interpretations of this verse, many of which we should have to refute, and thus bewilder the ordinary reader. We may just observe that:

- שבט—translated **"sceptre,"** means tribe and rod, and is fairly translated by some as "tribal staff."
- מִחֹדֶק—translated "lawgiver," the late Dr. McCaul translates, "a subordinate magistrate."
- שִׁלְהָ—Shiloh, is evidently the abstract noun for "peace," or "the peaceful one."
- עַמִּים—means **"peoples"** or **"nations."**

Dr. McCaul gives the sense of the whole verse as follows:—**"The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be."** In short, that whatever might become of other tribes, Judah must retain his separate existence as a tribe, and also his independent government, until the coming of Shiloh, to Whom the heathen should yield obedience.

Now ask the Jew questions on this passage.

- Should this passage not be regarded, honestly and reverently, as the Word of God?
- Has the tribe of Judah not been broken up and scattered to the four winds?
- Has not independent government ceased in Judah?
- Does not ancient Jewish tradition interpret Shiloh as the Messiah?
- Ought not the Messiah to have come before the breaking up of the tribe and government of Judah?

- Ought not some Gentile nations to be found acknowledging the Messiah as Lord?
- Did not Jesus come before the final dispersion of Judah?
- Have not Gentile nations been gathered to Him?
- Has He not, through His blood shed on the cross, given peace of conscience to millions of poor sinners?
- Has any person but Jesus any claim whatever to be considered as the Shiloh, the Messiah?
- If this passage be honestly accepted as the Word of God, does it not follow that Jesus must be accepted as the Messiah?
- If Jesus be rejected, does it not follow that this passage must be rejected as claiming to be the Word of God.
- Why reject the Word of God and die? Why reject Jesus and perish? **“Why will ye die, O house of Israel.”** (Ezekiel 18:31).

Very profitable questions may be asked upon a remarkable passage in Deuteronomy— **“The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken; According to all that thou desiredst of the LORD thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. And the LORD said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken. I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him”** (Deuteronomy 18:15-19).

Some Jews apply this to Joshua, some to Jeremiah, and some to a succession of prophets. The Jews have no authoritative interpretation of this passage, because they all wish to evade its application to Jesus, and it really fits no other person that ever lived since the days of Moses. Was not Moses, even as a prophet, different from all other prophets, except Jesus? Did not God say, as recorded in Numbers 12:6—8, that He would speak with Moses **“mouth to mouth”**?

Does not the inspired Word state that **“there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face”**?—פנים אל פנים—This latter passage is found in Deuteronomy 34:10, and is thought by many to have been added by Ezra as an inspired footnote.

- Was not the prophet Moses also a redeemer?
- Was not the Prophet of Nazareth the Redeemer?
- Was not the prophet Moses a Mediator?
- Was not, and is not, Jesus the one Mediator between God and men?
- Was not the prophet Moses a lawgiver?
- Did not Jesus reveal and do the will of God?
- Was not the prophet Moses called **“King in Jeshurun”**?
- Was not Jesus born **“King of the Jews”**?
- And did He not die as **“King of the Jews”**?

Now, my brother Jew, can you honestly say that any Jewish, prophet, since the death of Moses, has ever lived, who has been like Moses in having been spoken to by God **“mouth to mouth;”** and known by God **“face to face;”** and who was also a redeemer, a mediator, a lawgiver, and a king—except Jesus?

If Jesus is the only Jew possessing the marks of these distinctive peculiarities—and He is the only one—why not accept Him as Messiah and Saviour? Does not God say concerning this prophet that— **“I will put my words in His mouth, and He shall speak unto them all that I shall command Him”**? Did not Jesus say, **“He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father’s which sent me”**? (John 14:24).

Did not Jesus also say— **“As the Father gave me commandment, even so I do”**? And, **“I have given unto them the words which thou gavest Me”**? (Ch. 14:31 and 17:8)

Does not God declare that—**“Whosoever will not hearken unto My words which He [the prophet like unto Moses] shall speak in My Name, I will require it of him”**?

- Did not Jesus speak to the Jews the words of God?
- Did the Jews hearken to Jesus speaking the words of God in God’s name?
- Is it surprising that God should keep His word and punish disobedience?
- Have not the Jews been a punished people ever since they rejected Christ?
- By rejecting the words of the Father as brought to them by Christ, have not the Jews rejected the Father also?
- Is there no connection between the disobedience of the Jews and their subsequent punishment?

Take now the second Psalm. Ancient Jewish interpreters, and some modern ones, apply this Psalm to the Messiah. The modern ones give themselves immense labour in trying to make the Psalm misfit Jesus. Ask the Jew such questions as the following:—

- Is not the Messiah mentioned in the second verse as **“His Anointed”**— the Lord Messiah? (— **משיח**—).
- Are not the enemies of the Messiah the enemies of the Lord also?
- Is this Messiah not spoken of as king in verse six?
- Is He not spoken of in verse seven as the Lord’s Son by generation, and not by adoption?
- Was any king of Israel ever spoken of in this manner except Jesus?
- Did any king in Israel ever have the heathen for his inheritance, or the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession?
- Are not the kings and judges of the earth exhorted to the wisdom of doing homage to the Messiah, the King of Israel, the begotten Son of God?

Should they refuse, is there not danger of His being angry, and of their perishing? Are not all pronounced blessed who put their trust in the Messiah, the King of Israel, the Son of God? Is not a curse denounced in Jeremiah 17:5 upon all who trust in a mere man? Are the descriptions of the Messiah as given in this Psalm applicable to anyone but the Lord Jesus Christ? Then why not trust in Jesus and be supremely blessed?

Psalm 16, must be briefly considered. We do not propose to give an exposition of this beautiful Psalm, but simply to notice that part of it which relates to the resurrection of the Messiah. The subject of the Psalm is evidently the Messiah.

Dr. McCaul says, “The subject of this Psalm, then, is one whose delight is in God, who is in trouble, and therefore asks help; is rejected by the Jews, whose worship he will not accept: whose soul is not left in Hades, and whose flesh sees no corruption. Even according to Jewish interpretation, this can only apply to the Messiah, whom the ancient Jews expected as a sufferer, and to rise from the dead.” (*Schottgen de Messia*, pp. 564-568).

We may ask the Jew such questions as these—

- Can this “**Holy One**” be really any other than the Messiah?
- Can He by any possibility be David?
- Was not David’s body put in the tomb and left there?
- Did not David’s flesh see corruption?
- Is it not implied that this “**Holy One**” will die, be buried, and rise again from the dead, before the flesh sees corruption?
- Was not Jesus God’s Holy One?
- Did not Jesus die?
- Was not Jesus laid in the tomb?
- Was He left in—שְׁאוֹל—Hades, or the grave?
- Did the flesh of Jesus see corruption?

Have we not in the character and experience of this Holy One a photograph of the Messiah? Is not Jesus, and Jesus only, the person photographed? Why then not embrace Him as Messiah and Saviour?

Listen to what two Jews of sterling character have to say, on the highest authority, to their own people on this subject.

The Jew Peter says of Jesus—“**Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption . . . Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that His soul was not left in Sheol, neither did His flesh see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Messiah” (Acts 2:24-36).**

This testimony given concerning the risen Jesus by the Jew Peter brought 3000 of his Jewish brethren in one day to accept Jesus as Messiah and Saviour.

Now hear what the second Jew has to say. This Jew, a man of high character, ability, and learning, says to his brethren, when speaking of David, **“Of this man's seed hath God according to his promise raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus: When John had first preached before his coming the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel. And as John fulfilled his course, he said, Whom think ye that I am? I am not he. But, behold, there cometh one after me, whose shoes of his feet I am not worthy to loose. Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth God, to you is the word of this salvation sent. For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him. And though they found no cause of death in him, yet desired they Pilate that he should be slain. And when they had fulfilled all that was written of him, they took him down from the tree, and laid him in a sepulchre. But God raised him from the dead . . . And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David. Wherefore he saith also in another psalm, Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption: But he, whom God raised again, saw no corruption. Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses (Acts 13:23-39).**

On such clear testimony from Jews themselves, resulting in the conversion of thousands of Jews to Christ, and of hundreds of millions of Gentiles also, why should the Jews of the present day refuse to acknowledge Jesus as the **“Holy One”** whose flesh should not see corruption, as predicted in Psalm 16? Why not trust Jesus as having died for your sins, and risen again on account of your justification?

Many interesting questions may be asked the Jew on Psalm 22; such as—

- Can you read this Psalm with an unprejudiced mind and fail to see that it is a history of Jesus written several hundreds of years beforehand?
- Can you find any person except Jesus who has fulfilled it?
- Does not your commentator Kimchi, as well as the more ancient rabbis, interpret the title of this Psalm—**Aijeleth Shahar**—as **“I concerning the morning star”**?
- Is not this a title claimed by Jesus Himself? (Revelation 22:16).
- Is not the subject of this Psalm **“despised of the people”**—the Jewish people?
- Has not Jesus been despised by the Jewish people for ages, and more despised than any other Jew, yea, than all other Jews together? (See verse 6.)
- Is not the subject of this Psalm laughed to scorn by his own people?
- Is it not those who see him that laugh at him, mock him, and shake the head at him?
- Do they not taunt him by saying, **“He trusted in the Lord that He would deliver him; let Him deliver him, if He delight in him”**?

- Was not this the exact treatment Jesus experienced from the Jews?
- Was not Jesus mocked, spat upon, and crowned with thorns?
- Did not the passers by rail on Him, wagging their heads?
- Does not the sufferer in the Psalm die by crucifixion?
- Are not his hands and feet pierced?
- Was not this death Roman in form?
- Was not capital punishment among the Jews inflicted by stoning?
- Were not Achan and Stephen stoned?
- Did not Jesus die by crucifixion?

Who but God could tell hundreds of years beforehand that Jesus would be born under the power of Rome, and thus fulfil Scripture by being born in Bethlehem instead of at Nazareth?

Who but God could tell beforehand that Jesus would die by crucifixion and not by stoning?

- Have you carefully noticed the first and last words of the Psalm as uttered by the sufferer?
- Have you noticed that they were cries Jesus uttered on the cross of Calvary?
- Does the sufferer not say— **“My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me.”** And also did He not say—*Kee asah*—כִּי עָשָׂה— “that it is done”?
- Did not Jesus cry as the sinners substitute, in the sinner’s stead—**“My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me”**?
- And did He not also cry the cry of the conqueror as having accomplished the work of atonement—**“It is finished”**?
- Is it not wonderful that the sufferer himself tells what his murderers will do with his clothes after his death?
- Does he not say, **“They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture”**?
- Is it not said of Jesus— **“And when they had crucified Him, they parted His garments among them, casting lots”**? (Matthew 27:35).

How can anyone but God tell what murderers will do with a murdered man’s clothes?

- Is not God’s hand seen in all this in order to bring untold blessing to the human race?
- Is not the sufferer in the Psalm, and Jesus of Nazareth, evidently one and the same person?

Why not accept Him as God’s provision for the salvation of poor perishing sinners? Is it not wonderful grace in the sufferer to find Him saying to His enemies— **“I will declare thy name unto My brethren”**? (verse 22). Is it not noteworthy that Paul in speaking of Jesus says— **“He is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, I will declare thy name unto My brethren”**? (Hebrews 2:11, 12)

Are you Jews not exhorted to fear and glorify this sufferer? (see verse 23). **“All ye the seed of Jacob, glorify Him; and fear Him, all ye the seed of Israel.”**

Are we not told in verse 27 that the whole world shall be blessed through this sufferer?

Is it not stated that “**All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before Thee**”?

- Are not the Jews who refuse to fear and glorify Jesus the most miserable people on the face of the earth?
- Are not the Gentiles who trust in and follow Jesus the most prosperous, influential, religious, and useful people on the face of the earth?
- Are not believers in Jesus the most active and self-denying people in the world in spreading the knowledge of the true God and His word throughout the earth?

With such overwhelming evidence of the Messiahship of Jesus, ought it not to be more difficult to doubt than to believe? Why not abandon doubt which gives only misery, and why not try faith which assuredly brings salvation and eternal blessedness?

There are several other Psalms which contain more or less clear predictions of the Messiah, which any one truly interested in the subject will search out and make his own by prayerful study.

Keeping in mind our object, to help the ordinary Christian reader to meet the Jew on his own ground by questions on Messianic passages, we desire not to overload this branch of our subject. We must however give a brief notice of Psalm 110.

Ask the Jew such questions as the following—

- Is not this, as the title states, “*A Psalm of David*”?
- Does not that mean that David is the writer of the Psalm, and not the subject of the Psalm?
- Would it not do violence to Hebrew usage to translate —לִדָּוִד מִזְמוֹר— as, a Psalm concerning David, when—ל— is the sign of authorship?
- Do not the words “**My Lord**” in the first line mean David’s Lord?
- Does not David say that the Lord spake to David’s Lord?
- Who is the one of whom David speaks as “**My Lord**”?
- What does the Lord say to Him whom David designates “**My Lord**”?

Does the Lord not authorize David’s Lord to seat Himself at His right hand, the place of exaltation and honor?

- Is this exalted person whom David calls Lord any other than the sufferer of the 22nd Psalm, who died, was buried, and who rose again from the dead?
- Is He any other than Jesus?

According to verse 2 is He not to be a Ruler? According to verse 4 is He not to be a Priest? David was a ruler, but was he a priest? Is there not here a change of priesthood?

- Does this not imply a change in the Levitical law of sacrifice?
- Is not this person David calls “**My Lord**” a Divine Person?
- Is He not the same person as the one mentioned in verse 5 as “**The Lord at thy right hand.**”

Must He not necessarily be the same, as two persons cannot, at one and the same time, be at each other's right hand? Have you noticed that while "*Adonee*"— "**My Lord**"—is a form frequently applied to distinguished men, "*Adonai*"—**Lord**—in the 5th verse, is a form applied only to the Lord?

- Can the subject of this Psalm be any other than David's Son and David's Lord, the Messiah, the Son of God—Jesus?

The fifty-third chapter of Isaiah should be carefully studied and used freely and frequently in conversation with Jews. Many Jews know nothing about it. It is not read in the synagogues.

In the history of our Mildmay Mission to the Jews a venerable Jew, who had seen this chapter in Hebrew exhibited in the window of one of our mission rooms at the East End, came to see our missionary, Mr. Adler, in North London, and to compliment him on his ability to write such beautiful classic Hebrew, and that, in his composition, he had so clearly expressed the essentials of the Christian religion as based on atonement by blood.

The same Jew came to my house some time after, and said to me."

"I believe much about Christianity, but I cannot believe that God has a Son."

I replied, "I can quite understand your difficulty, and have much sympathy with you; and indeed I would not believe it myself if your Old Testament Scriptures did not teach the fact."

I opened my Hebrew Bible and read to him Proverbs 30:4, "**Who hath gathered the winds in His fists? Who hath bound the waters in a garment? Who hath established all the ends of the earth? What is His name.**"

Here I stopped for an answer, and the Jew replied at once—Jehovah—pronouncing it Adonai.

Now, I said, let me read on— "**And what is His Son's name, if thou canst tell.**"

He shook his head, and said, "I cannot tell."

I then said, "But happily I can tell, His name is Jesus."

He is now, we believe, a secret believer.

~ end of chapter 19 ~

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Israel’s Mission, and Missions to Israel

by

John Wilkinson

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CHAPTER TWENTY

FIFTY-THIRD CHAPTER OF ISAIAH

To the editor of the Jewish World

In the early part of the year 1881 a discussion for some weeks was carried on in the Jewish World—a weekly newspaper conducted by Jews—on the meaning and application of this fifty-third of Isaiah. I waited until the editor gave his summary in a leading article, for which he held himself responsible, and then wrote a brief reply to some of his statements, and gave my view of the chapter as plainly referring to Jesus as the innocent sufferer; and to the Jewish people as among those suffered for. The editor kindly inserted my letter in full, without a word of reply or comment. It may be helpful to some if I give the letter just as it appeared in the columns of the Jewish World for May 20th, 1881.

“Sir,—As one of your regular Christian readers permit me to express my thorough appreciation of your liberality in opening your columns for a friendly discussion of the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah—a chapter which many Jews have told me is never read in the synagogue.

“I fully agree with you when you say in your own notice of the prophecy, ‘NEITHER PROFOUND LEARNING NOR CRITICAL ACUMEN IS REQUIRED IN ORDER TO UNDERSTAND THE WORDS OF THE PROPHET OR INTERPRET HIS MEANING.’

“This principle is as sound as it is simple, and where truly applied to the reading of the Scriptures is honoring to the God of the Bible. It is devoutly to be wished that both Jews and Christians would read the Word of God on the principle that if the plain and obvious sense make good sense we should seek no other sense.

“Apart then from the fact, which is an important one, that ancient Jewish interpretation of high authority refers this chapter to the Messiah, and that thousands of modern Jews have been influenced by it to confess Jesus as the Messiah, the plain and obvious sense of this chapter will not permit its reference to the Jewish nation as meant by the innocent sufferer. It seems to me that the entire chapter or paragraph falls naturally into two parts.

“First, an innocent person suffering for the sins of others;

“Secondly, persons suffered for.

“Now if the person suffering for the sins of others whilst innocent himself be the Jewish nation, who are the persons suffered for? Surely not the Gentiles. For Isaiah was assuredly a Jew, and he puts himself amongst the persons suffered for, e.g., **‘He was wounded for our transgressions’** (מפושענו), **‘And with his stripes we are healed’** (ובחברתו נרפא־לנו). **‘All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.’**”

“If then, Isaiah, being a Jew, puts himself amongst the persons suffered for, the persons suffered for must represent the Jewish nation. The innocent sufferer cannot then mean the Jewish nation, unless the innocent and the guilty can be one and the same people at one and the same time. Besides, if the innocent sufferer means the Jewish nation, why should Isaiah, in his first chapter, call heaven and earth to witness a fact that ought to appall the universe, **‘I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. The ox knows his owner and the ass his master’s crib, but Israel doth not know, my people do not consider, Ah, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity’** &c.

“The repeated charges of guilt brought by Isaiah against the Jewish nation for their varied and multiplied transgressions absolutely forbid the identity of the innocent sufferer in the fifty-third with the Jewish nation, even apart from the fact that Isaiah puts himself amongst the persons suffered for. And, further, the language of the chapter itself forbids the identity. How can verse nine refer to the Jewish nation? **‘And His grave was assigned with the wicked, but he was with a rich man after his death, because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in His mouth’** (translated by a Hebrew scholar and a Jew).

“If this chapter do not fit Jesus of Nazareth, it certainly must be applied to one like Him; anyhow it cannot fairly be made to fit the Jewish nation, except as in the persons suffered for.

“You observe in your notice of the chapter that it cannot refer to Jesus because the 10th verse forbids this application. You say under (יִרְאֵה זֶרַע) and (יֶאֱרִיךְ יְמִים) that **‘CHRIST DIED CHILDLESS,’** and that **‘CHRIST PERISHED WHEN ONLY THIRTY-THREE YEARS OF AGE,’** and then you say, **‘NOW WE WOULD ASK ANY CANDID CHRISTIAN HOW THESE CONDITIONS WERE FULFILLED IN THE NAZARENE.’** No one can complain of the tone of this appeal to **‘ANY CANDID CHRISTIAN.’** In dealing with this verse I will endeavor to be **‘THE CANDID CHRISTIAN.’** You say that זֶרַע (*seed*)(IS NEVER USED IN HEBREW SAVE IN ITS PURELY NATURAL SENSE OF BODILY ISSUE.’

“Now in Isaiah 1:4 we have the sinful nation called; **‘a seed of evildoers,’** which surely means disciples or imitators of the wicked. Again in Isaiah 57:4 we have the expressions **‘children of transgressors—a seed of falsehood.’** But the passage to which I would specially call your attention is Psalm 22:30: **‘A seed (זֶרַע) shall serve him, it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation.’** In verse 27 of this psalm we find the Gentiles representing this seed of the Messiah reckoned a generation for the Lord: **‘All the ends of the world shall remember and turn to the Lord; and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee.’** So much for (זֶרַע) seed, no one will deny that Jesus has multitudes of disciples.

“Now permit a few words as to the words, ‘**he shall prolong days.**’ According to Daniel 9:26 Messiah is to be cut off (יכרת משיח).

“In Psalm 16:9, 10, the Messiah says, ‘**Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope. For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.**’ And further, Daniel 7:13 represents the Messiah as coming as ‘**Son of Man in the clouds of heaven.**’ And as No one can be called son of man who has not been born on this planet, these passages taken together—and they all relate to the Messiah—evidently teach the advent, death, resurrection, and return of the Messiah; so there seems no difficulty as to ‘**length of days.**’

“But it is not necessary to go beyond the verse itself, from which the words, ‘length of days’ are quoted, to find death and resurrection certainly implied. It is when; He shall make himself a sacrifice for sin (אשם) he shall see seed.’ &c. Now the sin offering was always killed, and it was no sin offering while alive, so that the seed was to be a seed after deaths and the length of days must be in resurrection life. You state that ‘THE WORD (לני) IS ACTUALLY PLURAL, THE EQUIVALENT, AS EVERY HEBREW STUDENT KNOWS, OF (להם) “THEM,” AND SO THE ANGLICAN TRANSLATORS VERY PROPERLY RENDER IT IN DEUTERONOMY 33:3, WHERE THE WORD TWICE OCCURS. SO THAT THE PROPHETIC VERSE IN HEBREW REALLY READS, “FOR THE SINS OF MY PEOPLE THEY WERE STRICKEN.” THIS, HOWEVER, WOULD HAVE BEEN AN AWKWARD ADMISSION FOR CHRISTIAN COMMENTATORS, SINCE THE TRANSLATORS OF THE AUTHORIZED VERSION WERE GOOD ENOUGH, IN THE SPIRITUAL INTERESTS OF THEIR FOLLOWERS, TO RENDER, OR RATHER, MIS-RENDER THE TEXT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THEIR PREVIOUS CONVICTIONS,’ I think, on reconsideration, you will see that such insinuations are not only ungenerous but unjust.

“In the first place, it is readily admitted that the *poetic* equivalent for (לני), is used as a plural in prose or historic Hebrew, but is used also as a singular in Job 20:23, and (להם), and also in Isaiah 44:15, (עשהו פסל ויסדו־למו), ‘**He maketh it a graven image and falleth down to it**’ (לני). But even should the plural be insisted on, the scope of the chapter would not be affected, for a very able Hebrew scholar, a Jew, translates it thus, ‘On account of the stroke which should have been upon them.’ and certainly the word (נני) being a noun, is better translated by: ‘*stroke*’ than by a verb in the passive.

“It should not be thought strange by the Jews, that Christians apply this chapter to Jesus, when the most ancient and trusted authorities amongst the Jews themselves apply it to the Messiah. Witness the famous Alsech, who says, ‘Our rabbis with one mouth’; have confirmed, and received by tradition, that king messiah is here spoken of.’ I trust that this discussion may be conducted with reverence and goodwill, and with a desire honestly to know the truth as God has revealed it. I feel sure you will do me the justice to receive this kindly, as I have for many years felt a kindly interest in your nation, and a longing desire for your spiritual and temporal welfare.

— yours obediently, John Wilkinson.”

A few questions we may suggest as proper to ask the Jew respecting this wonderful portion of Old Testament Scripture.

- Is there not here a wonderful sufferer, suffering for the sins of others, but having none of his own?
- How can this one sufferer be made to mean the Jewish people?
- Have they no sins of their own?
- Besides, who were the persons suffered for?
- Was not Isaiah a Jew?
- Was he not amongst the people suffered for?
- How can the sufferer and the people suffered for be the same?
- Did not the great majority of ancient Jewish interpreters regard this sufferer as the Messiah?
- Why should not modern interpreters do the same?
- Does not this sufferer answer exactly to Jesus?
- Does not the atoning work of this sufferer give meaning to all the atoning sacrifices offered under the Levitical law?
- Does not this atoning work also give hope to the poor sinner?
- Must you not have a Messiah according to Scripture?
- If your Messiah should come to-day, and must fulfil Scripture, must he not be all that Jesus was?
- Must he not do all that Jesus did?
- And must he not be treated by the Jews exactly as Jesus was treated?

Why not accept Jesus, trust His atoning blood for the forgiveness of your sins, and get eternal life as God’s free gift?

- Must the Messiah not be of the seed of David?
- Are not all genealogies lost?
- Must he not have come before the destruction of Jerusalem and of the temple, and have been “**cut off**” by a violent death?
- Are you not shut up to Jesus or no Messiah at all?

Throw away at once, my Hebrew friend, your prejudice and your self-righteousness, and accept Jesus as “**The Lord our righteousness**,” and get healing for your soul, through the stripes inflicted on Him. Jesus is God’s love-gift to poor sinners—Jews and Gentiles.

~ end of chapter 20 ~

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CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

THE LORD’S LEADINGS IN MISSION WORK AMONG THE JEWS

THE work of Jewish conversion is *God’s work*, not *ours*; only *ours* because *His*. Every worker in soul-winning should bear in mind that the work is the Lord’s, and that we do not do God’s work for Him, but that He does His work through us.

It is necessary that the instrument be absolutely surrendered to the will of the Divine Worker. There must be prompt, cheerful, unquestioning obedience to the clearly ascertained will of Him we call Master and Lord. The Christian is not his own; he is the property of another, and can honestly dispose of what he is and has, only according to the Owner’s pleasure.

If we allow the Lord to do what He pleases with us and by us, we shall get the greatest blessing, and He will get the greatest glory; and He will bear all the expenses of His own work. If a master send a servant to a shop for a shilling’s worth of anything, he will make himself responsible for the shilling; and shall it be thought for a moment that God will not pay for all work He acknowledges as His? Assuredly He will. But if the servant should go to shop without the master’s order, it is no surprise that he goes without the master’s shilling.

Is there no work *called* God’s work that is not His but only ours? Are there no worldly, and even sinful, modes adopted in getting money for work professedly God’s, and from which a holy God is obliged to withhold His blessing? Where there is life there is growth, and the growing needs of the Lord’s work will be provided by the Lord of the work.

All doctrinal, practical and experimental religion, to be worth anything, must be based on the Holy Scriptures.

- The doctrines we believe must be taught in the Book.
- The work we do must be commanded in the Book.
- The experience we attain to must be warranted by the Book.

The Book from the Lord of the Book must be everything to us. Let us then glance at God’s Word as the warrant for God’s work among the Jews.

“Preach the Gospel to every creature.”

The Jew must have the Gospel preached to him, “**whether he will hear or whether he will forbear,**” unless we dare to be knowingly disloyal to our Lord. Some say, “Yes, that is all very well, but the Jews won’t listen, they are so hard, so blind; it seems no use preaching to them.” God says, “**There is no difference between the Jew and the Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him; for whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved**” (Romans 10:12, 13).

God says, absolutely “**there is no difference.**”

The Christian Church has made a difference and is reaping the result. A very practical lesson immediately follows:—“**How shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed; and how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard; and how shall they hear without a preacher; and how shall they preach except they be sent.**”

The Church must send men to preach to Jew and Gentile; that Jew and Gentile may hear; that hearing, they may believe; and that believing, they may call upon, or confess the name of the Lord to salvation. There is with God no difference. Further, the Gospel was to be preached “**to the Jew first,**” and then to the Gentile. If we accompany Paul in all his journeys we shall find he never entered town or city but he sought out the synagogue and preached the Gospel first to the Jews, although he gloried in being the apostle to the Gentiles.

In precept we have apostolic doctrine— “**first to the Jew,**” and in practice we have apostolic precedent— “**first to the Jew.**” Paul preached and practiced this Divine order. Why should not we do the same?

There is much to encourage the observance of this order.

The Jews are in all lands, have access to all people; are familiar with all languages: are acclimatized to all countries; they believe three-fourths of our Bible; they are waiting for a Messiah; they believe in the one true God; hence how much there is to encourage effort for their conversion—loving, prayerful effort, that would redress the wrongs of ages, show gratitude for the priceless blessings received from them, and secure in them glorious auxiliaries in spreading the Gospel throughout the world.

The Jews have made, by Divine grace, illustrious men of God. One Old Testament convert said, “**I will speak of Thy testimonies also before kings and will not be ashamed.**” This was not idle boasting, for on another occasion the same Jew said, “**With my lips I have declared all the judgments of Thy mouth.**”

We have not only Scripture warrant, but much to encourage work for the Lord amongst the Jews.

Some think that this work is very discouraging, if not hopeless. But is there no connection between the hostility of the Jews to Christ and the cruel treatment they have received for ages from so-called Christians?

All the Christianity the Jews have seen for ages has been idolatry; and all they have felt has been cruelty. No wonder they have been prejudiced. After centuries of cruelty with its natural results, and which has not yet ceased, we have had a few years of kindness shown to a very limited extent, but yet with most encouraging results.

Many thousands of Jews now believe in and confess Christ. Hundreds preach His Gospel. Tens of thousands of Jews are now reading the New Testament, and are becoming better acquainted with its contents than are many Gentiles. True, they may not always read it from the purest of motives; some, however, have been converted while reading it only to oppose its claim to Divine authenticity.

A few years ago, blasphemy against Christ and of His mission was largely prevalent among the Jews; now they are speaking and writing in the most respectful terms of Jesus of Nazareth.

A distinguished Jew has spoken and published the following beautiful and eloquent sentiments:—

“It has been said, and with some commendations on what was called my liberality, that I did not in this discourse, on its first delivery, term Jesus of Nazareth an impostor— I have never considered Him such. The impostor generally aims at temporal power, attempts to subsidize the rich and weak believer, and draws around him followers of influence whom he can control. Jesus was free from fanaticism: His was a quiet, subdued, retiring faith; He mingled with the poor, communed with the wretched, avoided the rich, and rebuked the vainglorious. In the calm of the evening He sought shelter in the secluded groves of Olivet, or wandered pensively on the shores of Galilee. He sincerely believed in His mission. He courted no one, flattered no one; in His political denunciations He was pointed and severe; in His religion calm and subdued. These are not characteristics of an impostor; but, admitting that we give a different interpretation to His mission, when 150,000,000 believe in His Divinity, and we see around us abundant evidences of the happiness, good faith, mild government, and liberal feelings which spring from His religion, what right has anyone to call Him an impostor? That religion which is calculated to make mankind great and happy cannot be a false one.”

Another Jew, a distinguished Rabbi, speaking of Jesus of Nazareth, says:—

“We are far from reviling His character, or deriding His precepts, which are indeed, for the most part, the precepts of Moses and the prophets. You have heard me style Him the ‘*Great Teacher of Nazareth*,’ for that designation I and the Jews take to be His due. No enlightened Jew can or will deny that the doctrines taught in His name have been the means of reclaiming the most important portions of the civilized world from gross idolatry, and of making the revealed Word of God known to nations, of whose very existence the men who sentenced Him were ignorant.”

Sympathy manifested by Christians with the suffering Jews, in Russia, has had a wonderful effect on Jewish minds, and induced numbers to listen to the Gospel.

But now let us speak of the Mildmay Mission to the Jews.

There are other missions to the Jews as the London Society; British Society; Presbyterian Societies of England, of Scotland, and of Ireland; smaller Societies in Germany, France, Sweden, Sydney, and in the United States of America. This Mildmay Mission is a Mission, not a Society. It has no Committee or travelling Secretaries. It does not advertise for funds. Its agents simply testify to the Jews that Jesus is the Christ, in obedience to Him we call Lord, looking to the Lord to move the hearts of His people to send in voluntary offerings all the money needed to carry on the Lord's work. Let me give the reader a little personal history, and then a history of the origin and growth of this mission.

Personal

I was awakened to a sense of my danger and need of salvation in the year 1838, but did not definitely trust Christ till 1839. I united with others in carrying on cottage prayer meetings; was then called to engage in lay preaching, and invited to devote myself to the Christian ministry. To this last request I gave a decided no, under a deep sense of unfitness. But I continually told the Lord that I would do anything or go anywhere at His plain call.

In 1851 a friend in conversation incidentally mentioned a mission to the Jews, and asked my thoughts about it. I simply replied, "I know nothing about the Jews, but would gladly go if God called, for I like difficulties when grace is promised to overcome them, for facing and overcoming difficulties gives strength to character, and the Jewish field must be one of the most difficult."

I parted from my friend intending to think no farther about the topic of our conversation. The impression followed, which deepened day by day, "*That's your sphere.*" I prayed much about it, but had no peace till I offered myself and was accepted as a missionary student by a Jewish Missionary Society. My three years' course of study in Hebrew, Chaldee, Syriac, Greek, Latin, logic, and theology, together with my subsequent service in Israel's cause, have tended to confirm the above impression, "*That's your sphere.*"

After twenty-five years' connection with the Society, preaching Christ to Jews, and truth about the Jews to Christians of all evangelical denominations, travelling ten thousand miles a year during twenty-two years, I began to feel that much more ought to be done than was done in direct evangelistic work among the Jews. Not permitted to carry out the plans I proposed, the Lord appeared to be calling me to greater freedom of action, and to more simple and direct dependence on Him both for the needs of the work and for personal support. Such a mission depending directly on the Lord would furnish a powerful argument to the minds of Christians in favor of the work being God's work, and would bring down blessing from God on the Jews themselves.

In 1876 I voluntarily gave up a salary of £350 a year and threw myself and the new mission on God for support. I had frequently urged upon the late Wm. Pennefather the importance of a mission to the Jews in connection with the Conference Hall, telling him I believed the Lord would send unsolicited £1000 a year for such a mission. His reply was always to this effect, "Yes, I will gladly have a Jewish mission if you will come and conduct it."

This dear servant of God was taken home before I saw my way to take the step suggested. On the first day of June, 1876, this Mildmay Mission to the Jews was instituted, linked to the Conference Hall, and I lovingly welcomed by Mrs. Pennefather and the Hon. Capt. Moreton as its missionary and director. My personal needs were kindly guaranteed by private friends for a period of three years, so that I could not conscientiously take a salary for that period. We asked the Lord definitely for £1000 a year for three years, intending then to wait on Him for further guidance as to whether we should continue the mission or abandon it. It may be asked, what led you to commence this mission at that time?

Origin and Object

During the autumn of 1875, from notices in the papers I saw the war cloud arising between Russia and Turkey, and the Eastern question coming up again, which would bring nearer and nearer the restoration of the Jews to Palestine, and the return of our Lord.

The fact came home to my mind with heavy pressure—there are 80,000 Jews in Great Britain, about 40,000 in London, and 40,000 in provincial towns and cities (they have now—1892—increased to 150,000), and but little is done to reach them with the Gospel. Much is done in preaching about the Jews among Christians, with a view to collections and subscriptions, but little done amongst the Jews themselves to lead them to Christ: what if Jews should soon leave us for Palestine or our Lord return for His waiting ones, would there be no blood-guiltiness attaching to the conduct of Christians in our own land?

The simple object of the mission is, as far as possible, to preach Christ to all the Jews of Great Britain and Ireland, before the Jews leave us for Palestine, or the Lord returns for His people.

A printed circular was issued on the 1st of June, 1876, setting forth the way in which we proposed to mission the Jews in London, and, by an itinerant mission to visit the Jews in the towns and cities of England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales. Our principle in money matters has always been—Ask the Lord and tell His people.

The Lord sent to us the sum of £1,000 a year during our first three years. The £1,000 in 365 days the first year; the £1,000 in 365 days the second year; and the £1,000 in 363 days the third year. On the 364th day of the first we were between £9 and £10 short of the £1,000. No one was asked to make up the £1,000, the matter was left altogether in the Lord's hands. On the 364th day of the second year we were about £25 short of the £1,000. On the last day of the first year a check came in for £25; and on the last day of the second year there came a check to the value of £30.

The work growing and our needs increasing, we asked the Lord for £2,000 during our fourth year; and one day before the year closed the £2,000 came in. The promise by friends to supply personal needs for three years was kindly fulfilled, after which new arrangements were made. I felt the difficulty of appointing my own salary from the mission fund; so put the matter entirely in the Lord's hands, telling Him that if He would Himself supply my personal needs I would take no salary from any quarter.

I praise God, He has granted my desire and honored my trust, for although I have no private means, and have no rich friends pledged to give me one penny, and have never written a letter to ask for help, God has graciously moved the hearts of His people voluntarily to supply my need to this day, and has sometimes given me the luxury of giving back to Him the “**running over.**”

Indeed, we cultivate the habit of speaking to the Lord about every detail of the work. We not only ask Him for money, but also for workers; and although at first I thought only of another missionary besides myself, and perhaps a Bible woman to work among Jewesses, the Lord has given us about fifty-four workers—male and female—and sent from almost every evangelical denomination. About one-third of these workers are able and willing to give their services gratuitously.

Let me digress for a few minutes to give two or three facts which God used as stepping stones towards a life of absolute dependence on Him for the supply of all the needs of His work and His workers.

Over twenty years ago a Jew I met in the Midland Counties, after much prayer and effort, was brought to confess Christ. His wife opposed him and threatened to leave him. I visited and prayed with her again and again, and she confessed Christ also, and I baptized husband, wife, and children.

He seemed to possess the missionary spirit, for he won another Jew to Christ before his own baptism. I commended him to a secretary for mission work. The reply was, “We have no means, and besides, he ought to go to college for further education and discipline.”

My mind was much exercised about this case. My wife and I agreed to ask the Lord for £50 and I would then send the man to college, and trust the Lord for all further expense needed. A friend, unknown before, having heard of this case, called on me and said, “I have it on my heart to aid you with this case; how much shall I give you.”

“Excuse me, I shall name no sum, but will leave it with the Lord.”

He took out his check book at once and wrote a check for £50, saying, “Is that of any use to you.”

I burst into tears of gratitude to God; it was just the amount asked of the Lord. That case, in college and other expenses, cost me over £300, but the Lord sent it all, and a little over. The balance I gave to the man, saying, “Get your wife a new dress and your children boots.” This man afterwards told me that he had won for Christ seventy-five Gentile souls in three years.

The next thing in which the Lord signally answered prayer was in the matter of a home for aged Christian Jews. Some of these dear old folks, between seventy and eighty years of age, used to call at my house for relief. Considering that we got our Bible and our Saviour from them, it seemed ungrateful and unkind to let them go to the workhouse. Having failed to interest a committee, I went to see dear Mr. Pennefather and told him I wanted him to kneel with me and ask the Lord for £500 for a cottage home for aged Christian Jews.

We agreed, and knelt and prayed together. He rose from his knees and wrote the first check. This was on the 27th November, 1872. The £500 were sent in, the cottage bought and furnished, and soon occupied. I believed the Lord would smile upon the work though men discouraged. He seemed to say to me, “Cannot you take your orders from Me and lean on Me.” Take your instructions from headquarters.

On Messrs. Moody and Sankey’s visit to London a few years ago, I made an effort to arrange for one meeting a month for Jews in the north, east, south, and west of London, proposing myself to read the 53rd of Isaiah in Hebrew, Mr. Moody to preach in English. In this effort I failed. I went to Great Marlborough Street, whence papers were to be distributed from house to house, and said, “Will you have some Hebrew leaflets to distribute among the Jews.”

The reply was, “No, we cannot have sectional work.”

“But your work is sectional already, for Jews will not receive your papers, but will pass you on to their Christian neighbors; but if you have leaflets in Hebrew they cannot well refuse them. I will make you a present of a few thousands.”

These were accepted and I sent 5,000, and had other 10,000 distributed by volunteer ladies and gentlemen on two successive Saturdays along the streets of London.

The leaflet was just this— “Salvation for you,” and a verse or two from the fifty-third of Isaiah, in Hebrew, German, and English, and an invitation to hear Mr. Moody speak and Mr. Sankey sing the Gospel of Christ.

I wrote a letter to the Christian inviting lady and gentlemen volunteers to assist in the distribution all over London. About forty met me at the Conference Hall, Mildmay, and we went forth, two and two, on two Saturdays in succession. I found letters coming to me, saying: “You are doing a blessed work among the Jews, we should like to help you.”

When I came to add up the contributions sent in for this work exclusively, I found the sum to be the exact amount of the printer’s bill for these 15,000 leaflets. Get your work from your Master alone on your knees; be sure it is His work, and yours because His, and needed funds will come in.

These facts awakened thought in my own mind as to whether the worker with God and for God should not take his work direct from his Lord, and do it direct to his Lord, untrammelled by men who in many cases have neither knowledge of the work, nor a heart interest in it.

None of the three efforts above stated had the slightest sympathy from the committee—indeed the first was very strongly opposed—until they by the Lord’s blessing proved a success, and were then acknowledged as of God.

To return to our narrative.

We began our work in the open air on Sunday mornings in the East End of London, by reading the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah in Hebrew, and preaching Christ. Crowds of excited and angry Jews gathered about us and opposed. We took shelter in a place of worship till the police dispersed the crowd, then we went and preached in another part, and by-and-by found ourselves in Wellclose Square. A converted Jewess came out of her house and invited us in to converse with Jews indoors. We accepted, and went again week after week until we settled down and engaged the room for regular mission work.

We had two rooms thrown into one, then took also a back room for a night school for Jewish children. We began meetings on Saturday afternoons, from three to five o'clock, opened with silent prayer, a short prayer meeting having previously been held for power in testimony. We read a chapter in Hebrew, in German, and in English, and then showed from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ. Questions were answered, difficulties met, opposition and blasphemy silenced, and many souls in those rooms have confessed their faith in Christ. We opened another room in Bethnal Green, and had similar work going on at the same hour.

We soon found that Jewesses could not be reached by male agency, so we asked the Lord for a Bible woman. We learned from our dear friend, the late Mrs. Way, how to reach the Jewesses. This led to the institution of a weekly sewing class, with a provident fund attached, and to the employment of ladies in various branches of the work. The Jewesses were poor, ignorant, and superstitious, and at first it was difficult to get any to come. We worked and prayed for twenty-five, and got them. Then for fifty, and got them. Then for seventy-five, and then for a hundred.

The rooms at Wellclose Square, including the back room will hold when packed about one hundred and twenty. We have had this number and over, again and again, with sometimes ten to twenty more outside. They are wonderfully improved; they hear Gospel addresses, sing Gospel hymns, and many have acknowledged their faith in Jesus as the Messiah, and some secretly trust in Him as Saviour.

The rooms are used as reading rooms for Jews on some afternoons and evenings. We have also two bedrooms here for the use of inquiring Jews. Prayer meetings, Bible readings, preaching on Sunday evenings, and inquirers and converts' meetings are also held at Wellclose Square.

The next thing we did was to open a Night School for Jewish children.

The first night thirty-one came. We taught them to sing "Hold the Fort," then I asked, "Would you like to sing another." and they sang "Safe in the arms of Jesus."

"Now," "said, "I have thirty-six new hymn books; if you can say or sing these two hymns tomorrow, you shall each have one of these books as your own, with your name written on it."

The books were all cleared out on the following evening. Now, let me tell you an instance of the good of this. These children are from the homes of the very poor. Our Medical Missionary one day found a family of eight—father, mother, and six hungry children, dining contentedly a dinner that cost four-pence, consisting of rice and dripping.

In these poor homes when the father returns at night weary, he asks the children, “Rachel, can’t you sing.”

“Yes, I can sing, ‘Life for a look.’”

Ben, what can you sing.”

“I can sing “Come to the Saviour.””

“Well, sing then.” The parents remark to each other, “If we let these children sing like this, they will sing us into Christians.”

Our number now on the books is over 150 boys and girls. The school is conducted four nights a week by Christian ladies, who teach and sing the Gospel. Many of these dear Jewish children have learned to love Jesus and to sing His praise. This school was opened in December, 1876.

When about 1872 or 1873, I mentioned at the Annual Mildmay Conference that I desired a Home for aged Christian Jews, before referred to, a doctor wrote to me offering his services, as medical attendant, gratuitously. As soon as the Home was opened these services were gratefully accepted, and cheerfully given for some years.

In the month of August, 1877, while in Lincolnshire, holding services in my native village, I received a letter from the same doctor with the request, “Will you and your wife join me and my wife in prayer that the Lord would direct me as to my future? I have had it laid on my heart to become a Medical Missionary.”

My reply was, “Yes, we will, and if the Lord should honor me by allowing me to establish a Medical Mission in the interest of His ancient people Israel, and that you should be the first Medical Missionary, we will rejoice together.”

On my return to London we met and had prayer together, asking the Lord for £500 as a token that we were on the line of His will. Soon £300 were sent in. Then we had special prayer at Mildmay for the £200 more. A few weeks later I had to address a meeting in the suburbs of London. While praying in my study for blessing on the meeting, it was laid on my heart that there might be some present at the meeting able to give the £200, and I prayed accordingly.

There was no collection, no freewill offerings at the door, but the announcement was made that if anyone would like to give anything they might communicate with Mildmay. My wife and I hastened to the station, but lost the train by half a minute. Two ladies waited with us for the next half-hour train, and remarked, “We have been much interested in your desire for a Medical Mission, it is so Christ-like; our Lord was a Medical Missionary. You must have it. How much do you need.”

“£500.”

“How much have you.”

“£300.”

“We will give you the rest. Our Blessed Lord is coming back again and perhaps soon, and He must not find us too heavily weighted with gold when He comes.”

A short while after a check for £200 was put into my hands with these words: “Our love token to our Lord Jesus.” One of these dear ladies has since gone in to see the King.

Subsequently to my receiving the letter above referred to from the doctor, I received another from a qualified dispenser, offering gratuitously his services as dispenser at the Medical Mission till we could get the services of a younger man. We thanked the Lord for this offer, and although nearly two years elapsed before we opened the Medical Mission, we have had this kind and now aged friend’s services from the first day until the year 1889.

This Medical Mission, opened in Hooper Square, Leman Street, in January, 1880, has grown wonderfully. Though all know the Gospel will be preached to them, yet they come in crowds, taxing heavily the time and strength of two Medical Missionaries, two Dispensers, and two trained Deaconesses who assist them. Other Christian ladies render efficient aid by singing the Gospel to the patients while waiting to see the doctors.

Railway necessities obliged us to change our Medical Mission premises in 1884; and on the 18th of June of that year we had our dedicatory service at our new rooms in Cannon Place, Whitechapel: and on the 9th of September, 1887, we dedicated our present more commodious premises in Aldgate.

Dr. Dixon, our senior Medical Missionary, and Mr. Mummery, our senior Dispenser, have been with us from the first day of the Medical Mission. We have had also valuable help from Dr. Marshall, who had part private practice. Now we have a second Medical Missionary, Dr. Rocha, wholly given up to the work. The Medical Mission has brought to the surface an amazing amount of real and deep poverty and consequent sickness, but it has opened hundreds, nay thousands of doors and ears to the Gospel message, and many have received the message to the salvation of their souls.

Our itinerant mission is a most important branch of the work, and during the existence of this mission its missionaries have visited the Jews in nearly every city, town and village where Jews are located in England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales. Some of the places have been visited twice, and some three times over.

In our itinerant mission we carry with us the 53rd of Isaiah, in large Hebrew characters, place it in the windows of our lodgings, which soon draws the attention of all the Jews in a town, and our rooms have often been crowded till eleven o’clock at night.

After our visit to Hull, three young Jews followed us to London to give up all for Christ, and were afterwards baptized. One is now a devoted Missionary of this Mildmay Mission. Two of our Missionary staff I baptized at the Conference Hall.

A young Jew in Grimsby professed to trust in Jesus during our visit. Another, who was passing through Sunderland during our stay, professed to accept Christ in our lodgings. Another accompanied our Missionary from Liverpool and gave a clear testimony to his trust in Jesus, and preached Christ to his Jewish brethren at our Mission Room. Two others have been baptized in Glasgow, one by Dr. Andrew Bonar, and the other by myself. Others are asking for baptism Oh for a mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Israel that hundreds and thousands may flock to Jesus!

The Lord has graciously manifested His approval of this itinerant work in direct conversions and also in other ways—for instance: we sent two Missionaries to Scotland to preach Christ to the Jews, and gave them £20, saying, “Spend it economically, and if you want more send to me, but do not ask anybody else.”

I told them to seek out a godly cabman, who had written to me expressing interest in the Jews.

On arriving in Edinburgh, they left their luggage at the station till they found lodgings. P. J. first found them and informed them that they had taken rooms in which prayer had been offered for about two years that God would send missionaries to the Jews in Edinburgh. When they left, the lady of the house would not charge for the lodgings.

The morning on which our brethren left Edinburgh for Glasgow, a merchant in the latter city sent me a letter to London, stating in substance, “I hear you are sending missionaries to the Jews in Glasgow; this will be attended with expense. Will you accept the enclosed bank notes, value £20.”

This was the exact amount of the check! As further expense was incurred further contributions flowed in. Indeed, we seemed to have nothing to do but to pray and praise, and then praise and pray.

The growing work and increasing usefulness of the Medical Mission suggested to the mind of Dr. Dixon the desirability of a Convalescent Home, where, shut out from Jewish influence and shut in to Christian influence, many a son of Abraham might find health for his body and salvation for his soul. We took the matter to the Lord in prayer and He graciously answered.

One Saturday evening in October, 1882, after preaching to the Jews in the East End, I called upon a delicate lady in Mildmay and prayed with her, and she quietly put into my hand an envelope which contained a check, value £500. During the next month, a lady who was present at an address I gave at the house of a nobleman in the country, wrote a letter to the Countess expressing a desire to give £1,000. The Countess sent the letter to my bedroom, and I knelt to praise God with the letter in my hand. Some property was afterwards sold by this lady which realized £1,166 6s. yd., and a check to that amount was sent to me for our Convalescent Home.

We purchased and furnished a leasehold property in Langdon Park Road, Highgate, which was dedicated to the Lord by praise and prayer on the 5th of February, 1884.

The first Jew who entered the Home was brought to Christ, and many a soul has since then received the Lord Jesus Christ as Messiah and Saviour.

In the growth and development of the work it was soon felt that a home for inquirers having no trade, or thrown out of employment because of their attending our mission services, would be a most useful institution; keeping the inquirer near us until he found Christ, and in the mean time helping him, if possible, to some suitable employment in this land, or by emigration to some work in another land.

We brought the matter before the Lord in prayer for guidance. We thought first of a shoe-making business, then of a carpenter's business, and at last decided on a printing business, in which, during inquiry, the inquirer might learn a trade by which he might after three years' instruction earn his own living.

The Lord graciously answered prayer, provided us with the necessary means, and guided us to a suitable site on Newington Green, and our printing house and inquirers' home was dedicated to the Lord by praise and prayer on the 7th of November, 1882.

An interesting incident may be mentioned here to the praise of God.

The night before the dedication of this institution I was in my study at nine o'clock asking the Lord to guide me to a suitable portion of His Word to be read at the meeting the next afternoon. My mind was directed to the 29th chapter of First Chronicles, noticing specially "**Who then is willing to consecrate his service this day unto the LORD?**" in verse 5; and "**From Thine own hand have we given Thee,**" in verse 14.

I closed the book and went down to supper.

I was called from the table about ten o'clock that night to see a working man who wished to speak to me. I asked him in; he threw his old cap on the floor and said, "I understand you are going to dedicate to the Lord to-morrow your home for inquiring Jews; I cannot be with you except in spirit, for my time is not my own, but I have brought you an offering."

He then filled his hand for the Lord with thirty-five new bright sovereigns—every one George and Dragon—and laid them on my table.

I said, "Let us kneel down and praise the Lord together; you pray first."

He simply said, "Lord, of Thine own have I given Thee; please accept this in the name of Christ. Thanks be unto Thee for Thine unspeakable gift."

This was great encouragement to consult God about the choice of a chapter to be read in His public service. Five young Jews confessed Christ in this institution during its first year, and many others since. Many who have had the benefits of this institution are now earning their own livelihood.

For many years poor Jews have been flocking to our country from Russia, Romania, and other countries. Some have large families. They are ignorant of our language and of our ways of doing business. Neither Jews nor Christians will employ them. What are they to do? Many fathers leave wife and children for some other country, believing that somebody will look after and help them when they are gone, whilst they were sure to starve as long as the father remained with them. The mother struggles on to get bread for her six or eight children, and it is a struggle.

Under these circumstances I often felt what a blessing it would be to have a home and school for the Christian training of destitute Jewish children, whether orphans or not. On the 22nd of April, 1883, I was preaching in Kent. Between morning and evening services I walked in the grounds and sat in the summer house of my host.

In the summer house, with no one near but God, I found myself talking to the Lord about His work amongst Israel, thanking Him for allowing me to do something for His still beloved people. I mentioned to the Lord these poor children, and asked Him whether He had laid their interest on my heart, or was the thought about them simply a hobby of my own.

At once the following passage was borne home to my heart with great force, **“Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it.”** I meditated for a moment and then said audibly “Lord, this is Thine own word, I take Thee at Thy word; please give me for Christ’s sake, in the interest of poor Jewish children, the sum of £3,000, or at least a larger amount in one sum than you have ever yet given me.”

It was impressed on my mind to ask that it might come within twelve months. I prayed the whole year for it. The 22nd of April, 1884, came round, and only two or three pounds came by the morning’s post. I still waited on God, and about eleven o’clock in the forenoon a lady called and brought a note by hand from another friend in the suburbs of London. The lady who called with the note had just said, “I am going to the city to-day and shall call on Mr. Wilkinson, at Mildmay, on my way.”

The friend replied, “I wish you would kindly take a note for me, it would save a penny stamp, and my servant the trouble of taking it to post.”

The note simply said, “I know the Lord is guiding me, and He has laid it on my heart to give you £1,350.” I was evidently guided by the Lord to purchase Cromwell Lodge, on Newington Green, for the sum of £1,200 freehold; furnished it, and dedicated it to the Lord by praise and prayer on the 20th February, 1885.

Dear little Jewish children have been coming in one by one ever since, some with us from the commencement, and others for a longer or shorter period according to the circumstances or wishes of their friends. Several of these lambs have been brought under the care and love of the Good Shepherd. Three of them are supported by private friends at the rate of £20 a year each.

When the Cottage Hospital was built at Mildmay we desired two beds for Jews for twelve months as an experiment.

The sum of £100 was needed. One friend sent £25 and we had no more sent till the time of the opening.

At one of our Monday noon prayer meetings at Mildmay we reminded the Lord that the Hospital was now ready, would He be pleased soon to send us the remaining £75 needed. We had the £75 promised the same evening by a friend who was not at the prayer meeting, and who did not know that the £75 had been prayed for that day.

I was taking tea that evening at Mr. Mathieson's, in company with Mr. and Mrs. Müller, Mr. and Mrs. Hudson Taylor, Dr. and Mrs. Burns Thompson, and others, when a friend sitting next to me said quietly, "I wish to give you £50 for a bed at the Hospital for Jews."

I thanked the Lord and the friend, and then said, "I think the Lord intends me to have two beds." "How much have you got?"

"With your £50, I have £25 over the cost of one bed, but £25 short of the cost of two."

The friend replied, "I would just as soon give you £75 as £50."

This provided two beds for one year, but we afterwards found that the sick Jews preferred the Hospital at Bethnal Green as nearer to their homes. Our mission pays at that Hospital £1 a week for adults, and half price for children. It is open to any of the Lord's stewards to provide beds for the poor sick ones, at the rate of £1 a week for one patient.

It must not be supposed for one moment that we have had no trials, for we have had them, and sharp ones too, but our gracious Father has hitherto strengthened us to bear them and then brought us safely through them, giving us an ever-enriching experience of His faithfulness.

One special instance may be given here which made a deep impression on my own mind and may be encouraging to other workers in different fields.

At one time we had no money coming in for several days, neither for the mission fund nor for personal use. I talked the matter over with my dear wife, whose suggestion was that it was a fresh call to our knees. I felt the same. When such trials are experienced, our minds are exercised to ask the Lord if there is anything displeasing to Him in the conduct of the workers or the work or is it simply a trial of faith.

I closed my study door, fell on my knees, and with feelings too deep for utterance, I put the Mildmay Mission to the Jews back again into the hands of the Lord, telling Him that I could go on no longer unless He would show His hand, and continue to own the mission as His by sending in supplies at once.

The next day a friend called and said, "God has sent me to your house, and impressed me to write a check for £50."

We knelt and praised God together. Enclosed in the envelope with the check I found the following on a separate bit of paper which lies on my desk as I write this, "By orders from the Courts above—£25 for the general work of the mission, and £25 for yourself."

On the day following, another friend drove to my door with carriage and pair asking for an immediate interview. On entering my study he said, "God has sent me here to write you a check; give me pen and ink."

He wrote a check value £10 and said, "£7 for the mission fund and £3 for your own use."

We knelt and praised the Lord together. He was an "exclusive brother" up to that day, but not since, and the Lord has graciously honored him in winning souls. He has kindly written several checks since then; and so also has the first-named friend.

To this day God has frequently tried our faith, but He has always been faithful and supplied our need these more than fifteen years. The regular mission work, support of Missionaries, rent of rooms, Medical Mission, work among Jewesses and children, Itinerant Mission, Inquirers' Home, Convalescent Home, Children's Home; besides the most blessed but necessarily expensive work of distributing the Hebrew New Testament among the Jews throughout the world, needs about £5,060 a year. The New Testament movement seems to us the most wonderful work of God in these latter days. We here give a brief account of the Hebrew New Testament movement, its origin, and its progress down to date.

Mr. Salkinson was the first Jew to translate the New Testament into Hebrew. Other translations existed, in many respects excellent, and faithful to the grammar and the lexicon, but lacking in the spirit, style, and sweet flow of the Old Testament Hebrew idiom, of which Mr. Salkinson was a master, and perhaps had not his equal in Europe. He had, a few years before, translated the Epistle to the Romans, and had also translated into beautiful Hebrew poetry Milton's "*Paradise Lost*," which has been highly eulogized by competent critics.

This was the man, a Christian Jew, whom God raised up and prompted to give as his life work to his own beloved people a translation of the new Covenant into idiomatic Hebrew.

When far on towards completion, Mr. Salkinson came over from Vienna to London in the autumn of 1882 to make arrangements for getting his work into print. He spent a day with me, and begged me to help him. I urged him to seek the aid of the British and Foreign Bible Society.

He replied, "I have already done so, and they refuse it. Wilkinson, can't you help me?" After a while I thought of the Trinitarian Bible Society, the Secretary of which Society, Dr. Bullinger, I knew well, though of the Society itself I knew little or nothing. I wrote to Dr. Bullinger at Walthamstow, and requested an interview.

Through an oversight, I received no reply to this request, though other matters were answered. The matter thus stood over till the 26th of December, 1882. This being a holiday I walked over for a constitutional, and laid the whole matter before Dr. Bullinger.

His reply was, "It seems quite providential, for we have just had a legacy, and have been praying for guidance as to its use; lay the matter in writing before our Committee and they will probably take it up."

This was done. Mr. Salkinson and the Committee came to terms. Shortly after, however, and before the translation was finished, dear Salkinson was called to rest. The Committee then secured the services of Dr. Ginsburg, a scholar of European reputation, and a fellow-student of mine and of Salkinson, 1851-1853.

Dr. Ginsburg laid aside other important work and threw himself heartily into the unfinished work of his old friend. He edited the entire work, and conducted it through the press, besides translating the last fifteen chapters of the Acts of the Apostles.

The first edition of 2,000 was exhausted in a month. This was issued in 1885. Scores of Jewish Missionaries expressed their appreciation of the translation in loud praise. Three or four Gentiles and one or two Jews criticized it unfavorably. There were undoubtedly several errors, though none of a serious character. A thorough revision was called for, which engaged the attention of six Hebrew scholars during the latter months of 1885 and the former of 1886.

I had already acquainted myself with Rabinowitz and his movement in South Russia, and had formed his personal acquaintance in Berlin, where I invited him to meet me in March, 1885. His conversion was effected through the instrumentality of a Hebrew New Testament. It was again and again pressed home to me—Why not a wide and free distribution of Hebrew New Testaments amongst the Jews throughout the world?

This was thought and prayed about till the matter took the form of 100,000 copies of the revised edition for free distribution. This number at one shilling each would cost £5,000. The matter was first mentioned in public at our annual meetings for praise and prayer, held in the Conference Hall, Mildmay Park, on Monday, January 4, 1886. J. E. Mathieson, Esq., presided, and J. Denham Smith and Dr. Sinclair Paterson gave addresses.

Some friends thought we were going too fast, but we committed ourselves to nothing, we asked only for prayer for the guidance of our God in the matter.

On February 1st, at a drawing-room meeting in Highgate, a friend asked, "How soon do you expect light on this matter?"

I replied, "During this spring."

An account of the Annual Meetings, including a reference to this desire for 100,000 Hebrew New Testaments, appeared in the February number of *Service for the King*. This came under the eye of a gentleman who was led voluntarily to give a check for £3,000. This came on April 19, 1886, while I lay on a sick bed at Hastings. It was at the same time an answer to a prayer offered for three years but without any definite object beyond the general good of Israel. The same friend who gave the £3,000 gave a guarantee for all that might be short of the £5,000, in order that we might make better terms with the printers in Vienna by ordering the 100,000 at once.

The Trinitarian Bible Society ordered an edition of 110,000. 100,000 for our Mission, and 10,000 additional for themselves. When the check for £3,000 arrived we had already in hand from other friends about £630.

On the 27th of April, 1886, the friend who gave the £3000 on the 19th of the same month sent £120 more, which made the sum £3750. This was deposited in the bank in the joint names of Dr. Bullinger and my own until it should be required.

To allow the work to proceed as rapidly as possible the sum of £3,750 was paid over to the Trinitarian Bible Society early in September, 1886. On the 9th of October, 1886, I received the first presentation copy by post direct from Vienna. The friend who gave the £3,000 and also the £120 kindly sent another check for £700 in April, 1887. Other friends had voluntarily contributed to the amount of £1,180, so that the £700 made up the £5,000 as at first promised. The sum of £1,250 was appropriated to aid the distribution of these Hebrew New Testaments throughout the world.

In the autumn of 1886, Messrs. Baron and Barnett were sent out by this mission into North-East Prussia, taking one side of Pomerania on their outward journey, and the other side on their return. Full accounts of their arduous but blessed work were given in subsequent numbers of *Service for the King*.

In the spring of 1887 these same brethren were sent out, to Austria proper, Hungary, Bohemia, and Galicia, with increasing encouragement as testified by notes from their journals published in *Service for the King*, and in the *Quarterly Record* of the Trinitarian Bible Society. It was on this journey that they obtained at Leipzig the names and addresses of between two and three thousand rabbis.

Our brethren were authorized to spend the sum of £18 or £20 in postage, and 2,237 Hebrew New Testaments were sent by post to as many Jewish rabbis.

While all this was going on abroad, and our hands pretty full with the growing work at home, we were earnestly praying that the Lord would open Russia, where nearly 4,000,000 of Jews are located, or about one-third of the Jewish population of the world.

Mr. Mathieson and I had a very friendly interview with the Russian Ambassador, His Excellency Count Staal, who advised us to put ourselves in communication with our own ambassador in St. Petersburg. Dr. Bullinger, in the meantime, sent copies of the New Testament to all the leading Censorships in the Russian Empire, and obtained permission to send them into the country. Scores of initial difficulties were in our way, but the Lord led us His way, and the difficulties were overcome. Our missionary, Mr. Adler, though twenty years in this country was still a Russian subject, having never been released by that Government. We thought it better to pay arrears and renew his Russian passport, so that he might work as a Russian subject.

Dr. Althausen, a Christian Jew of St. Petersburg, a Russian subject, and wearing military honors, associated himself with Mr. Adler.

His local knowledge, social influence, religious character, and true sympathy were of the greatest service. Early in July, 1887, Mr. Adler left London for St. Petersburg, followed by hundreds of prayers for guidance and blessing. Prayer was answered, doors were opened, local governors gave their consent, and, notwithstanding many difficulties, Mr. Adler and Dr. Althausen had about three months of blessed work together.

In the course of their work they called on Pastor Courland, at Mitau. Pastor Courland is an evangelical Lutheran minister, a Christian Israelite of great experience and influence, and Primarius of the district of Gurland with its 130 Lutheran pastors. Pastor Courland was formerly a missionary to his Jewish brethren, but practical sympathy failing among his supporters he subsided into a Lutheran pastorate. When he heard from Mr. Adler how the Lord had raised up friends in England voluntarily to give means to purchase 100,000 Hebrew New Testaments to be freely distributed as love-gifts among his Jewish brethren, he seemed overwhelmed, his missionary fire and zeal were rekindled, and he longed to help in the work.

He sat down and wrote a stirring circular, and sent copies all over the Russian Empire.

We opened a depot at Wilna on March 29, 1888; crowds of Jews of all classes came for the books, so that by the 7th of April 1,250 copies were discriminately distributed. In a letter from our Mr. Adler, dated September 5th, 1888, he tells me that in the course of a few days nearly 3,000 copies were distributed amongst the Jews in Minsk; and that this populous town and district were all astir, crowds eager to possess and read the book. We have the consent of the local governor to open a depot at Minsk.

Besides the distribution of several thousands through the personal efforts of our missionaries in various parts of North Africa, Pomerania, Austria, Hungary, Bohemia, Galicia, Romania, and Russia; we have cheerfully responded to requests coming from missionaries of the London, British, and Presbyterian Societies, and from individual workers, and from private individuals interested in Israel. Four requests were for six copies each; one for eight, one for ten, two for twelve, two for twenty, nine for twenty-five, two for thirty, one for forty, seven for fifty, eight for a hundred, one for one hundred and fifty, one for three hundred, seven for five hundred, two for one thousand, one for fifteen hundred, in three installments of five hundred each, one for two thousand, and one for three thousand. The letters of thanks and of encouragement received from missionaries, and from other friends, bear one testimony that the work is of God.

For obvious reasons we withhold the names of those who have applied for and received copies to the extent above named.

Those copies have been distributed in London, Liverpool, Leeds, Glasgow, Belfast, Dundee, Paris, Marseilles, Rome, Constantinople, Adrianople, Salonica, Philipopolis, Prague, Lemberg, Dresden, Leipzig, Hamburg, Dantzigr Kornthal, Strasburg, Cologne, Gibraltar, Altona, Kischeneff, Jerusalem, New York, Chicago, Jamaica, The Cape, Brazil, Melbourne, Singapore, and Burma.

Altogether between eighty and ninety thousand copies have been sent out into various parts of Europe, Asia, Africa, America, and Australia.

We have a loud call for Judeo-Polish Scriptures. We have ordered twenty-five thousand copies of Gospels and Epistles. Our Mr. Adler has translated the Gospels of Matthew and John, and the Epistles to the Romans and to the Hebrews. The Trinitarian Bible Society are having them printed at Vienna, and we are already distributing them.

We ask much prayer, for we have many opponents, but God is assuredly with us.

North Africa

In the spring of 1887 our missionary, Mr. Halbmillion, was sent to North Africa, and part of Morocco. During three months, he and Mr. Mercadier, of the North African Mission, visited several towns, preached Christ to great numbers of Jews, and distributed many hundreds of New Testaments amongst them. Accounts of this most interesting mission appeared in *Service for the King*.

On Mr. Halbmillion's return home he expressed an earnest desire to return for a more lengthy period, to preach Christ to these poor sheep, in many cases without a shepherd. We prayed about it, and in a few months the Lord opened the way by inclining the heart of a Christian gentleman to consider the needs of the Jews in North Africa and Morocco, to write to us respecting those needs, and then voluntarily, the Lord enabling him, to guarantee the expenses of a mission for three years. This was evidently of the Lord, and we praised Him for this answer to prayer. Mr. and Mrs. Halbmillion left London for Tangiers early in December, 1887.

They laboured amongst the Jews in Tangiers, visited the Jews in Gibraltar and Tetuan, until August the 8th, 1888, when Mr. Halbmillion was suddenly called to his rest. We have already sent out another missionary—Mr. Dressier—and we are making further arrangements in the interest of the work in Morocco and North Africa.

Proposed Mission Hall in the East End of London

The numbers of Jews and Jewesses coming weekly under the influence of this mission, and willing to listen to the Gospel, have outgrown the capacity of our rooms. Our medical mission is crowded. Our meeting for Jewesses is most uncomfortably crowded; when packed as closely as possible we can crowd into the two rooms at Wellclose Square about 120—and have then often to shut out 20 others. We borrow a room of our kind friend, Mr. George Holland, in which to conduct our night school; and when we have gatherings of three or four hundreds for Gospel addresses with magic lantern, or at our annual tea-meetings, we find great difficulty in hiring suitable rooms near.

We have long thought how helpful it would be to our work in London if we had one central mission hall large enough to embrace all the departments of our work.

Numbers still flock to England, hear the Gospel, and carry the tidings to other parts of the world. Ask the Lord and tell His people has been our line of conduct to this day. If this project be of the Lord's prompting, as we believe it is, He will incline His stewards willingly and liberally to contribute for His sake; and if it should not be for His glory He knows we do not wish it. The Lord tells us in very plain terms how we Gentiles may bless the Jews in matters both spiritual and temporal.

“For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief: Even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy” (Romans 11:30, 31).

“For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things” (Ch. 15:27).

“O ISRAEL, THOU SHALT NOT BE FORGOTTEN OF ME” (Isaiah 44:21)

Trustees of Property belonging to the Mildmay Mission to the Jews:—Sir Arthur Blackwood, K.C.B.; Henry Carr, Esq., Carlisle; Samuel Field, Esq., Walthamstow; John Griffin, Esq., Clapton; J. E. Mathieson, Esq., Mildmay; Benjamin Thomas, Esq., Bristol; Dr. Wood, J.P., Southport; John Wilkinson, Mildmay.

Beloved friends, the time is short. Israel's restoration is near. The Eastern Question hastens for settlement, and the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. Has all been done that ought to have been done, in testifying to the Jews that Jesus is the Christ? Brother, sister, let us each one tell our Lord that we are doing something, for His name's sake, in the interest of His brethren according to the flesh, and that which will be pleasing to Him.

~ end of chapter 21 ~

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“ISRAEL MY GLORY”

Israel’s Mission, and Missions to Israel

by

John Wilkinson

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CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

AN EXPOSITION OF THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER OF THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS

THIS is one of the most marvellous portions of the inspired volume as unfolding the purpose of God in the Jews during this age of individual election and national rejection. For my own part it has been a prayerful study for the past thirty years and more, until nearly every word has photographed itself on my memory.

It is the chapter the Holy Spirit used in awakening an intelligent and lifelong interest in the conversion of the Jews in the heart of the late eminent Dr. Marsh. When simply Mr. Marsh, Charles Simeon requested him to supply for him at Stroud and preach on behalf of the Jews. Mr. Marsh pleaded inability to deal with this special topic. Mr. Simeon induced Mr. Marsh to accept on supplying him with his (Simeon’s) sermon. The portmanteau containing the sermon was, by mistake of the coachman, dropped short of its destination, and Mr. Marsh found himself in Stroud without the sermon. He retired to his room and read and prayed over this eleventh to the Romans. Just before service time the local secretary announced the arrival of the portmanteau, and asked, shall we get out the sermon?

“No,” replied Mr. Marsh, “neither Simeon nor Marsh will preach to-night on Jewish conversion, but Paul.”

The study of this chapter most probably contributed to Mr. Marsh’s clearness of view as to the elective character of the present dispensation, and also as to the relation of the premillennial advent of our Lord to the national interests of Israel. This chapter abounds with perhaps a greater variety of distinct doctrinal points on the Jewish question than are to be found in any other twenty chapters of the Word of God. It contains a mine of wealth, and cannot fail to enrich all who dig into its contents as for hid treasure.

This chapter carefully distinguishes between the election of the nation to special privileges and temporal blessings in Palestine, and the election of individual Jews to eternal life in Christ. It also distinguishes between the temporary fall and casting off of the nation, and the exclusion of individual Jews from the blessings of the Gospel. It even teaches the doctrine of a spiritual election of individual Jews during the very period of the national rejection.

It teaches an election within an election, and that election from the elect nation during the nation's rejection.

- It links the apostle Paul, an elect individual Jew, with Abraham, the father of the elect nation now temporarily rejected.
- It links the spiritually elect individual Jews with the inner election in the days of Elijah.
- It teaches that the national rejection has, by God's overruling providence, been made the occasion of extending the blessings of individual spiritual election to the Gentiles.
- It teaches that if a calamity to the Jewish nation has occasioned large though limited blessing to the Gentiles, how much more may we expect universal blessing to the Gentile world instrumentally caused by the nation of Israel restored and blessed.
- It teaches that the God-fearing, Bible-believing, Messiah-expecting Jew presents facilities to missionary enterprise no other people in the world present.
- It teaches the duty and privilege of converted Gentiles to seek the conversion of the Jews.
- It teaches that the gift of Palestine will never be recalled, and that the call of Abraham will never be revoked.
- It teaches the blessing of the nation of Israel on the return of the Lord.

Indeed its contents, linked to Abraham and the times of Elijah, extend over the whole period between the first and second advents of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The tenth chapter having closed with a quotation from the 65th of Isaiah, "**All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people,**" the eleventh chapter appropriately opens with the question— "**I say then, hath God cast away His people.**"

Was their national election only temporary? Or has the nation's disobedience led to a change in the Divine plan. "**God forbid**" or, by no means, it may not, or it cannot be. (μὴ γένοιτο) "**For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.**"

As much as to say to those who think that national rejection has at all imperiled individual salvation—Do you believe in my Jewish origin? Yes, certainly. Do you believe in the reality of my conversion? Yes, truly. Well then, Paul might say, apart from the fact that thousands of Jews were converted at Pentecost, and subsequently, the fact of my Jewish origin together with the fact of the genuineness of my conversion is proof enough that, though the nation is rejected for a time, God hath not cast off His people as to their individual, spiritual, and eternal interests, "**For I also am an Israelite.**"

"**God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew,**" neither totally nor finally—not totally as to individual salvation, not finally as to the nation. God has always had an election within an election; some loyal worshippers of God during times of general apostasy. "**Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying, Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life. But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal**" (I Kings 19:14, 18).

“Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.”

The fact that notwithstanding the general national apostasy in the days of Elijah the Lord had seven thousand who had not bowed the knee to Baal, leads the Apostle by Divine authority to draw the inference that down to his own day, and in his own time, there continued **“a remnant according to the election of grace.”**

We may draw the same inference at any period, past or future, during this present dispensation, and say, **“Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.”** **“But if it is by grace, it is no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace.”** If the salvation of the individual sinner be an act of grace or favor on the part of God, then works of merit are entirely excluded. Saved by grace excludes works. Saved by works would exclude grace.

“What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded (According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day” (Isaiah 29:10; Deuteronomy 29:4).

“And David saith, Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumblingblock, and a recompence unto them: Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back alway” (Psalm 49:22, 23).

Israel sought justifying righteousness in obedience to law, but obtained it not, for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. Paul could say even of his unconverted state, **“as touching the righteousness which is of the law, blameless.”** **“But the election hath obtained it”**—hath obtained justifying righteousness.

The election here represents the individual believing Jews, willing to be saved in God’s way, by grace alone, through faith, without the deeds of law. **“Israel”** in this portion represents the nation as such, and the **“election”** represents the saved individual Jews. The saved individual Gentiles during this elective dispensation are saved on the same terms as individual Jews.

“What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith” (Romans 9:31-32).

God’s way of salvation for Jew and Gentile is, by grace, through faith; man’s way is any other way. Man is saved only in God’s way and surely lost in his own way. “The rest blinded,” or hardened, (πρωρόω) denoting a heart devoid of feeling, and a darkened understanding, or perverted judgment. The unbelieving Jews, like unbelieving Christians, are all the worse for abounding in religious privileges; for bright light blesses some and blinds others.

The hardening was the natural result of the unbelief and outward conduct of those hardened. **“In whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds (thoughts) of them which believe not,”** is true alike both of Jew and Gentile. Though the above word for **“blinded”** is *“hardened”* in the Greek, there is a distinction made between blinding the eyes, and hardening the heart, as given in John 12:40, the former word being from **τοφλῶω**, and the latter **πωρόω**. The blinding of Israel’s eyes and the hardening of Israel’s heart were the natural result of Israel’s willful refusal to admit the force of the evidence by which God confirmed the Divine mission of Jesus.

“I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall?” (**ἵνα πέσωσι**) *to their destruction*).

“God forbid” (**μὴ γένοιτο**)—by no means, certainly not. **“but rather through their fall παρὰπτῶματι**, marginal reading, *trespass*) **salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy”**; or, *to excite them to emulation*.

The stumbling of the Jewish nation at the doctrine of Christ crucified is not a stumbling resulting in the destruction of the nation, as the first word translated **“fall”** implies—the same Greek word being used in the following passages, **“Whose carcasses fell in the wilderness”**; **“the walls of Jericho fell down”**; **“Babylon is fallen, is fallen.”** The second word in the verse translated **“fall”** is another word altogether, whose proper meaning is trespass, and is translated in the New Testament by the words *trespasses, offences, sins, faults*.

The meaning of this verse is that, although the Jewish nation has fearfully stumbled, it is not to be destroyed, and that pending the nation’s restoration and blessing, and the fulfillment of the purpose of the nation’s election and preservation, the nation’s trespass in rejecting their Messiah is to be made the occasion of large though limited blessing to the Gentile world, and thus the Divine mission of Jesus proved to the unbelieving Jews by the transformed characters and lives of Gentiles who believe in and follow Him. The effect of Christ-like lives amongst Gentiles will be to excite the Jews to emulation when they see the reality and power of the Gospel of Christ.

Now if their fall (**παρὰπτῶμα**) is the riches of the world, and their loss the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their fulness? Here it must be distinctly observed that the word **“fall”** is not the word representing *ruin and destruction*, but is the word used in the preceding verse to represent *trespass, offence, fault*. The truth taught seems to be this—the Jews committed a trespass in rejecting the Lord Jesus Christ, and suffered terrible loss as a consequence; but God overruled this trespass and loss to the spiritual enrichment of the Gentile world. The Gentiles have received large though limited blessing occasioned by the trespass of the Jews. The inference is that, if the Gentiles have been largely blessed through an overruled calamity to the Jews, **“how much more their fulness”**—that is, how much more may we expect the fulness of blessing to the Jewish nation to prove an instrumental blessing to the whole Gentile world.

“Their fulness” (**πλήρωμα αὐτῶν**) stands in contrast with **“their loss”** and represents their complete national restoration and conversion. The rejection of Jesus by the Jews, and the national rejection of the Jews in consequence, were both predicted in the Old Testament Scriptures; and when fulfilled became evidence to the Gentiles both of the Messiahship of Jesus and of the inspiration of the Scriptures, and thus helped forward Gentile conversion.

But the Old Testament Scriptures contain also predictions of national restoration and blessing.

When these latter predictions are fulfilled, the former having lost none of their force, the evidence to the truth of Holy Scripture and to the Messiahship of the Lord Jesus will simply be overwhelming.

“For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office: If by any means I may provoke to emulation (excite to jealousy) them which are my flesh, and might save some of them. For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?”

The Lord had said to Ananias at Damascus respecting Paul, **“He is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings, and the children of Israel.”** And **“the Holy Ghost said, separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them . . . So they being sent forth by the Holy Ghost.”**

Paul could thus speak to the Gentiles with commanding authority. He put honor upon his ministry as the apostle of the Gentiles, rejoicing to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, not simply and solely to get Gentiles saved, but that by winning Gentiles to Christ **“I may provoke to emulation”** my Jewish brethren and save some of them. As much as to say, “I have tried by observing the Divine order **‘to the Jew first’** to bring my Jewish brethren to Christ; but have not succeeded to the extent of **‘my heart’s desire.’** I will now see if I cannot save some Jews by preaching the Gospel to the Gentiles. When the unbelieving Jews witness the changed hearts and transformed lives of converted Gentiles they may be convinced of the divinity and reality of the religion of Jesus Christ.”

Thus Paul glories in his ministry to the Gentiles as another channel for the expression of his burning love to his Jewish brethren. And why so earnestly desirous for the conversion of **‘some of them?’**

Let the answer be first given in the beautifully simple words of the Holy Spirit Himself, **“For if the casting away (the national rejection) of them is the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead.”**

This verse asks, in what relation do Jews stand to Gentiles? How do the fortunes of the former affect the interests of the latter? And the answer seems to be this—If the temporary casting away of the Jewish nation has been used of God in bringing reconciliation to multitudes of Gentiles, how will the reception of the nation into Divine favor affect Gentile interests: it will indeed prove **“life from the dead”** to the whole Gentile world, as Charles Wesley says on this passage:—

The world shall their reception find,
Life from the dead for all mankind.

Not only is the restoration and salvation of the nation to be a blessing to the world—this Paul knew perfectly well—but the salvation of **“some of them”** now, in this dispensation of the church, is to be a strength to Gentile believers, and a blessing to Gentile sinners, by helping to preserve from spiritual death Gentiles who are spiritually alive; and by instrumentally producing spiritual life in Gentiles dead in trespasses and sins; in short, hastening the completion of the church, and the return of her Lord.

“And if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also: and if the root be holy, so are the branches.”

There is a beautiful connection between the truth taught in this verse and that taught in the verses immediately preceding. We have just gathered that the conversion of the Jews as a nation will be **“life from the dead”** to the whole Gentile world. But the nation as such is cast away, and has been cast away for nearly two thousand years, so that many Christians have given up all hope of national restoration to Palestine, and consequently all hope of national conversion; believing that so far as the Jews are to be blessed in the future they will simply drop one by one into the Christian Church as the result of the Holy Spirit’s blessing on means at present in operation.

No, says the inspired apostle, the nation, as such, is not yet done with; nor is the mission of the nation fully accomplished, although temporarily the nation is still **“cast away.”** **“If the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also: and if the root be holy, so are the branches.”**

The **“firstfruit”** and the **“root”** represent one class of Jews, and the **“lump”** and the **“branches”** another class of Jews; but they are both, alike **“holy.”** The word קֹדֶשׁ in the Old Testament and ἅγιος in the New have a twofold meaning, *separation* and *purity*.

In the Old Testament it is used to represent not only the **“holy people”** but also the **“holy land,”** the **“holy house,”** and the **“holy vessels.”** These were all **“holy”** in the sense of having been separated, dedicated to God, irrespective altogether of the question of moral purity. Indeed the same Hebrew root is used to describe a harlot amongst the daughters, and a Sodomite amongst the sons of Israel. That is, those separated, dedicated to sin. (Deuteronomy 23:17).

The term **“holy”** as applied here to the **“firstfruit”** and the **“root,”** and also in the same sense to the **“lump”** and the **“branches”** must be understood as the separation of the Jewish people from all other people by their national election, and the dedication of that people in all time to God. The **“firstfruit”** and the **“root”** we take to represent the patriarchs of the nation, and the **“lump”** and the **“branches”** to represent the entire nation sprung from their loins; for the promises were to Abraham and to his seed. So that, though the patriarchs are dead and generations of their descendants have passed away, the people still exist as a separate people—dedicated in all time to God, preserved to be blessed and to become a blessing to the world.

“And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear: For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee.”

The first point to be noticed in these most instructive verses is this—some branches broken off, not all. Another important point is—that the Gentile, compared to a worthless wild olive, was grafted in among—*not instead of*—them; that is, believing Gentiles were grafted among believing Jews. Another important point is—that the Gentile believer was simply to “**become a partaker**” with the Jewish believer, of the root and fatness of the olive tree.

The Gentile was not to become a *monopolizer* of spiritual blessings in Christ—only a *partaker*.

The Gentiles have not taken the place of the Jews, but have merely been admitted to a share on common terms in the blessings of a common salvation. “**Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee.**” The “**root**” has the same meaning here as in the two preceding verses; the root is Abrahamic. United to the Lord Jesus Christ by faith the Gentile becomes linked to Abraham in a covenant of faith made with Abraham “**not in circumcision but in uncircumcision . . . that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised**” (Romans 4:10, 11).

The Gentile believer must not cherish a spirit of pride and boasting towards even the broken-off Jewish branches, but rather cultivate gratitude for undeserved mercies flowing through a Jewish channel.

“**Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in.**” This, observe, is what the Gentile in his ignorance says; not what the apostle Paul by inspiration says.

Paul is here anticipating an error into which the Gentiles would fall. Paul does not say, “the Holy Ghost saith”; nor even, “I say I; but “*thou wilt say*”—the Gentile will say—I branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in.” Paul had already admitted that “**some branches were broken off;**” so that the Gentile was right as to the *fact*, he was wrong only as to the *cause*. The broken-off branches was made the *occasion*, not the *cause* of blessing to the Gentile.

“**Well**”; (καλῶς) granted. Granted what? Granted the fact already stated, that some branches were broken off. Now the cause which the Gentile should have waited for— “**because of unbelief they were broken off.**” They were not broken off in order to make room for the Gentiles, but in consequence of their own unbelief.

There was room enough in the atoning work of Christ, room enough in the heart of Christ, for every individual Jew. The unbelief of the Jews caused the breaking off, and the breaking off of some Jewish branches occasioned blessing to the Gentiles. Jewish and Gentile believers in Christ were alike Abraham’s spiritual children, and were joint partakers of the root and fatness of the olive tree; for having embraced the religion of Christ they perpetuated the essentials of the religion of Abraham, Moses and the prophets; but those Jews who rejected Christ broke away from the religion of Abraham, Moses, and the prophets based on atoning blood, and became adherents of Rabbinism, which boasts the absence of atoning blood, “**Thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear: For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee.**” The Jewish branches were broken off for unbelief; the Gentile wild olive graft stands only by faith. God’s Word never says “**fear**” without a reason.

The history of Gentile Christendom shows that the warning was not unneeded, though it has been unheeded. The unbelief and moral corruption of the Jews brought the judgments of God on “**the natural branches;**” so the unbelief and moral corruption of “**the wild olive**” will bring down the judgments of God on apostate Christendom.

“Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.”

We are here called upon to contemplate two different aspects of God’s conduct towards men—Jews and Gentiles.

Towards the Jews—severity: their temple destroyed; their cities laid in ruins; their land made desolate; themselves butchered by tens of thousands, and the remnant hunted into, and persecuted in, the four corners of the earth. *Severity*—the inevitable result of national apostasy.

“But toward thee (the Gentile) goodness.” Not absolutely and unconditionally, but only “**if thou continue in His goodness.**”

This epistle is the epistle to the Romans, a divine letter addressed to the Church *at* Rome, which has developed into the Church *of* Rome, and farther into Gentile Christendom. At the time when this epistle was written the Church at Rome was a model Church. Paul could say of its members, “**your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.**”

“Continue to bear such a character and to maintain this position, and the goodness of God towards, you will continue. Let there be no change in your condition and you will find no change in God’s conduct. Preserve apostolic simplicity, sound faith, fervent love, holy zeal, and the blessing of God will be continued and increased; but apostatize from sound doctrine and holy practice, as did the Jews, then assuredly ‘**thou also shalt be cut off.**’”

“And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graff them in again.” This verse holds out hope on behalf of cases the least hopeful—the branches broken off for unbelief. If any might be despaired of surely these. There is hope for the unbelieving individual Jew all through this present dispensation, if he continue not in his unbelief. There is hope also finally for the nation continued in successive generations. God’s ability to bless the individual and also the nation implies His willingness and perhaps also His pledged purpose.

Let us not then any longer look on these unbelieving Jews as dry and withered olive branches along which sap nevermore can flow, but, like dry sticks, are fit only for the fire; rather let us in obedience to, and in the spirit of Christ, take hold of them kindly and gently, and bring these broken-off branches to their own olive tree; and though we cannot give them vital union, God says, I can. “**God is able to graft them in again.**” Grafted again into their own olive, “**Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit.**”

“For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?”

The apostle here takes a long step beyond the mere hopefulness of cases the least hopeful; he asserts that, humanly speaking, Jews are less difficult to convert than Gentiles.

At the risk of repeating some remarks given in a former chapter on this verse, to keep up the connection with the context—preceding and following—we must offer a brief exposition here of this remarkable verse. The Gentile believer has for many hundreds of years thought it almost if not altogether impossible, to convert the Jews; and many, to their reproach, think so still.

We may say of such: **“they do err, not knowing the Scriptures.”**

The apostle here takes an illustration from nature while reversing nature’s law, and the reversal of nature’s law adds beauty and force to the illustration itself.

First notice the principle on which olives are grafted.

The good are grafted on the wild, and not the wild on the good, and the wildness of the wild olive is subdued by the goodness of the good graft. If the wild were grafted on the good, the wildness of the wild olive would subdue the goodness of the good olive, and all would run wild together. Some, aware of this, have supposed that Paul had fallen into error. But Paul was inspired; besides, he was an educated man and familiar with Palestine and olive grafting.

Mark his words. He speaks of grafting the wild on the good as **“wild (contrary) to nature;”** had he said in *harmony with nature*, then we might have suggested a mistake. The Jews here are termed **“natural branches.”** It is quite as appropriate to designate the Jews natural branches as to call the Gentiles wild olive grafts. They are both regarded as to the difference in their religious condition, the Gentiles as idolaters, the Jews as fearing God, believing the Old Testament Scriptures, and waiting for the Messiah on the authority of those Scriptures.

The Gentiles as idolaters may be considered wild in three aspects.

- They have gods many and lords many, in contradistinction from one and only one.
- They worship the many visible to the bodily eye, instead of the One invisible.
- They worship the many they themselves made instead of the One who made them.

In these three respects the Gentiles may appropriately be termed wild olives. The Jews are natural branches. How so? Jesus is the embodiment and interpretation of the Mosaic economy.

- He is God incarnate.
- He reveals the Father.
- He fulfils Jewish prophecies,
- He explains the sacrifices and priesthood of the Jewish religion.

To be a true believer in Moses is to be a true believer in Christ. Hence the Jews are natural branches. Now mark the force of the inference, if the wild olive graft of an idolatrous Gentile can be taken and grafted contrary to the laws of nature into a good Jewish olive stock, how much more shall these Jews which are the natural branches be grafted into their own olive tree.

It occurs to me that we may derive further instruction from this remarkable passage.

The wild olive grafted on the good, if left to itself, would subdue the good; that is, it would work *according to nature*. The wild olive graft, the Gentile, though grafted contrary to nature, is controlled by grace, and while controlled by Divine grace is contented to be a partaker, and a *partaker* only, of the root and fatness of the olive tree.

But these wild olive grafts, the Gentiles, have misunderstood their relationship to the Jewish natural branches and to the Jewish olive tree, as partakers only with believing Jews of the root and fatness.

The Gentiles have neglected the warnings in this chapter— **“be not highminded, but fear,” “glory not over the branches,” “otherwise thou also shall be cut off.”**

They have regarded the Jews as altogether cast off to an indefinite period, and themselves as having taken the place of the Jews in the Divine purpose and favor. They have called themselves spiritual Israelites, and have designated the Christian Church—composed of Jew and Gentile— *the Gentile Church*—justifying this designation by welcoming Gentiles everywhere, and by excluding Jews, under the influence of idolatry and persecution at the worst, and by neglect at best. The Gentile wild olive graft should have lost its wildness by incorporation in the Jewish Christian Church as a partaker only of its blessings; but it has claimed to be a spiritual Israel, the Gentile Church, and has thus produced a Gentile Christendom almost as corrupt as heathendom.

The Gentile wild olive graft has subdued the good olive; it has worked according to nature instead of under the controlling and subduing influence of grace.

“For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.”

The partial unbelief and consequent partial blindness of the Jews is a *revealed* mystery, the ignorance of which will produce conceit. Has there been no culpable ignorance of this mystery resulting in Gentile conceit and a sense of superiority? What is this *revealed* mystery? Simply a *partial* hardness or blindness which has befallen Israel—*partial* and *temporary*; neither *total* nor *final*.

What part of the Jewish nation is blinded or hardened? Is the blindness an arbitrary infliction of God, or has it an adequate cause? We read in the 7th verse that **“the rest were blinded** (hardened),” and in the 17th verse that **“some of the branches were broken off.”**

The partial blindness is the result of an adequate cause. The blindness is not a cause, but a consequence, a consequence of another cause, that cause—unbelief. **“Because of unbelief they were broken off.”** The unbelief has been partial and the hardening partial. If the Christian Church has not regarded the Jews as *finally* abandoned of God, she has certainly for ages regarded them as *totally* blind, and treated them accordingly; that is, she has cruelly treated them at the worst, and culpably neglected them at best, regarding the conversion of the individual Jew as almost if not altogether hopeless; inflicting a grievous wrong on the Jews themselves and incalculable injury on herself.

The four veils on the Jews, their nature, and manner of removal, are fully discussed in chapter 10, and to that chapter we direct the reader’s careful attention. This partial blindness, chronologically, is bounded by a fixed and definite period. It is to last during the period of national rejection and dispersion. It is to last during the “times of the Gentiles.” It is to last during the gathering of the Church—that is, between the first and the second advents of our blessed Lord, who, addressing the nation, said, **“Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord”** (Matthew 23:39).

It is to remain **“until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.”**

“Until” implies continuance and cessation—continuance, during a period and cessation at its close. But what is meant by **“the fulness of the Gentiles”** which must come in before Israel’s partial blindness passes away? It cannot mean, as some take it, a filling up of Gentile iniquity. This **“fulness”** must evidently mean *blessing*.

The word **πλήρωμα** (*fulness*) must consistently be taken in the same sense as **πλήρωμα** applied to the Jews in verse 12—that is, in the sense of blessing. But it cannot mean the blessing of all Gentile nations as such, for this blessing is to come after Israel’s national conversion, and Israel’s national blessing is to be the instrumental cause in producing it. We take it then to mean simply this—**“All the individual Gentiles saved during this elective dispensation and who form the Gentile portion of the Church, the body and bride of Christ, and designated in Acts, 15th chapter, “to take out of them a people for his name”—these, with the “remnant according to the election of grace” from the Jews, complete the Church and close this dispensation. The partial blindness of Israel then passes away, and the time for the blessing of the nation arrives. “And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, ‘There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob’: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.”**

Here we have the guaranteed conversion of the entire nation of Israel.

“This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people: and they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more” (Jeremiah 31:33, 34; Hebrews 8:10; 10:26).

No language can express in clearer or stronger terms the conversion of the Jewish nation.

“Israel shall be saved by the Lord with an everlasting-salvation.” “In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory” (Isaiah 65:17, 25).

But the special circumstance under which the nation’s conversion is to take place is by the personal and premillennial advent of our blessed Lord, **“As it is written.”** We are now referred to Isaiah, 59th and 60th chapters. **“The Redeemer shall come to Zion.” “The Deliverer shall come out of Zion.”** He shall come to Zion, and shall display His power and glory out of Zion, in turning away ungodliness from Jacob, and in His personal superintendence of the world’s blessing through restored and saved Israel. **“As for Me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord; My spirit that is upon thee, and My words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed’s seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever.”**

This is final restoration and blessing. Now restored and blessed Israel is addressed—not the Church—but the national Israel— **“Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee . . . And nations (Gentiles) shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.”**

“As touching the Gospel, they are enemies for your sake; but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers’ sake.”

The Jews, as a nation, are enemies of the Gospel of Christ, and, as a nation, are **“cast away”** during this dispensation. As their national rejection of Christ and their own national rejection were both predicted, both these events become evidence of the truth of the Scriptures and of the Messiahship of Jesus; and thus Jewish unbelief becomes mysteriously a ground for Gentile faith.

Gentile believers reap benefit from Jewish unbelief. Here the election (*τὴν ἐκλογὴν*), on account of which the Jews are still beloved for their fathers’ sake, is the *national* election. The word “election” has two distinct applications in this chapter; one refers to individual Jews elect to eternal life in Christ Jesus, and are called **“a remnant according to the election of grace”**; the other refers to the elect nation.

The latter sense is the meaning in this verse. God has entered in covenant relationship with the patriarchs and with their seed, and in view of the purpose of their national election they are still beloved of God. The national election was typical of individual and spiritual election in Christ Jesus. The interests of the national are bounded by time; but the interests of the spiritual extend throughout eternity.

The Jewish nation cannot be destroyed, but must be preserved till the purposes of election are fully accomplished; neither can the elect in Christ Jesus be destroyed, for Jesus has said, **“All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me” (John 6:37); and “they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand” (Ch. 10:28).**

The unbelief of the Jewish nation, like the national “**casting away**,” and the national “**trespass**” referred to in verses 11, 12 and 15, having been overruled for large though limited blessing to the Gentiles, the faith of the Jewish nation will prove a direct and instrumental blessing on an universal scale.

“For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.”

God has not repented, has not changed His mind, respecting the gift of Palestine, or the call of Abraham and his seed to be a blessing to the world.

“For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief: Even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy.”

Notice the little word “**now**” occurring three times in these two verses. We take this word here as covering the present dispensation. All through this dispensation the *partial disobedience* of the Jews is made the occasion of the *partial conversion* of the Gentiles.

Further, all through this dispensation the partial conversion of the Gentiles is to be the instrumental cause of blessing to the Jewish “**remnant according to the election of grace**”; that is, through the mercy shown to Gentiles the Jews are now to obtain God’s mercy in Christ Jesus.

Gentile Christians, please observe, it is not *through your cruelty*; it is not *through your neglect*; but “**through your mercy**,” or, literally “*the mercy shown to you*”—through your compassion in exercise, your love at work— “they also may now obtain mercy.” Gentile Christian, will you faithfully examine your own conduct in the presence of God with this passage of His own word before you? If you do so, and adjust your conduct to its teaching, you will assuredly be blessed in your obedience.

“For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all.”

The Gentiles lost the knowledge of God and became disobedient. Their disobedience became the occasion of Jewish national election. The Jewish nation became disobedient.

The partial disobedience of the Jews became the occasion of partial blessing to the Gentiles. The obedience of saved Gentiles becomes the instrumental cause of salvation to the elect remnant of Jews. Gentile Christendom becomes disobedient and apostate.

The disobedience of Gentile Christendom becomes the occasion of the conversion of the Jewish nation, and the Jewish nation becomes the instrumental cause of the blessing of the world. God shuts up all—Jews and Gentiles—unto disobedience that He “**may have mercy upon all**.”

“O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and His ways past tracing out!”

Here the apostle, with his powerful, well trained, and well stored mind, aided by the inspiration of God, seeks to fathom the depth of the riches of Divine wisdom and knowledge as manifested in the plan of human redemption and unfolded in the history of the Jews. The apostle does not carp and cavil at that which he cannot comprehend; he does not question the wisdom of God's arrangements; but he finds his own wisdom unequal to the task of judging God's determinations, and his own knowledge insufficient to trace out God's ways.

In the plan of Divine dispensations there are infinite depths, not only of wisdom and knowledge, but also of the riches of wisdom and knowledge. In deep consciousness of our very limited capacity to understand even all God has in mercy revealed, let us cultivate a spirit of devout and humble gratitude for all we are permitted to know, and firmly trust His wisdom where we cannot discover the meaning of His words, and rely upon His knowledge where we cannot trace His ways.

Here **"we know in part."** We will not be so foolish as to refuse Jesus and salvation through Him because He is God's unspeakable gift. Neither will we refuse the riches of His grace here, or the riches of His glory hereafter because those riches are **"the unsearchable riches of Christ."**

We know enough to adore, to praise and to trust. Job had an exceptional experience, but even he confessed, **"Lo, these are but the outskirts of His ways: And how small a whisper do we hear of Him! But the thunder of his power (mighty deeds) who can understand."** (Job 26:14)

"For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been His counsellor? or who hath first given to Him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again." What man on earth or what angel in heaven has ever understood all the reasons of God's conduct towards men in redemption and in providence. To whom has God been indebted for counsel and advice in the formation or execution of his plans? If anyone can show that God is under any obligation to him for counsel he shall have a full recompense. God is indebted to no one. He knows the end from the beginning. He says, **"I am God, and there is none like me; declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done; saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure"** (Isaiah 66:9, 10).

"For of Him, and through Him, and unto Him, are all things." Of Him as the source of all things created. Through or by Him all things are upheld and governed. And unto Him the universe owes adoration, praise, trust, love, and service. **"To whom be the glory for ever. Amen."** To Him, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one God, be the glory unto the ages. (εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας) Amen. **"Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord"** (Psalm 150: 6).

~ end of chapter 22 ~

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“ISRAEL MY GLORY”

Israel’s Mission, and Missions to Israel

by

John Wilkinson

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CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

CONCLUDING REMARKS AND SUGGESTIONS

- We have gathered from the Word of God that Israel’s national election is unconditional, and that the preservation of this nation to the end of time is guaranteed.
- We have also gathered, from the same Word, that the purpose of this election and preservation is that Israel may be a channel and an instrument of blessing to all the nations and families of the earth.
- We have also gathered, on the same authority, that all the promises to Israel, relating both to temporal blessings in Palestine, and to spiritual blessings in Christ, are to be literally fulfilled to the national Israel—they are neither cancelled to Israel nor transferred to the Church, even though the Church may make use of them in a secondary and spiritual sense.
- We have also gathered that the rejection of Israel is only national and temporary; it is neither total nor final. Their rejection has excluded the nation from the possession of Palestine for a definite period, but has never excluded the individual Jew from the blessings of the Gospel except on the ground of individual unbelief.
- We have also gathered that during that national rejection of Israel, and occasioned by that rejection, the Holy Spirit is calling and preparing the Church, composed of individual Jews and individual Gentiles, as a Bride for the Bridegroom—a second Eve for the second Adam. The Jewish portion of the Church is called “**a remnant according to the election of grace**”; and the Gentile portion, “**a people taken out for His name**”; both one in Christ, who is the Head of His body, the Church.
- We have also gathered that a future restoration to Palestine, in unbelief, is assured to the entire nation of Israel; that the time of “**Jacob’s trouble**” will culminate after restoration, in the attempt of Antichrist to crush the nation out of existence, in order to produce universal atheism; and that in Israel’s extremity the Lord Jesus Christ will appear in person on Mount Olivet, accompanied by His Church which met Him in the air, to destroy Antichrist; to establish universal peace; to convert the remnant of the restored nation; to “**reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before His ancients gloriously**”—indeed, to be “**king over all the earth, one Lord, and His name one.**”
- We have also gathered that the throne of David will be occupied by David’s Son and Lord. He having received the millennial kingdom from the Father, reigns over the house of Jacob; superintending the blessing of the entire world through restored and saved Israel, and then, at the close of the millennial reign, He delivers up the kingdom to the Father that God may be all in all”;

- We have also gathered that the theory of the Israelitish origin of the Anglo-Saxons is unscriptural and mischievous, and indeed directly contradictory to many of the plainest passages of the Word of God.
- We have also gathered that the Lord expects His Church to spread the knowledge of His name and Gospel all over the world, and that He and the Holy Spirit together have given definite instructions as to how this work can best be accomplished.

First, the disciples were to receive Holy Ghost power; then be witnesses to Christ, according to the program laid down by the Lord Himself in His very last words—Jerusalem, all Judea, Samaria, and uttermost part of the earth. Obedience as to Jerusalem, all Judea, and Samaria, was followed by marvellous blessing.

Then Paul was specially chosen to carry out the last clause— **“to the uttermost part of the earth.”**

Now the Holy Spirit gives definite instructions as to the best way of accomplishing this part of the commission, namely, **“To the Jew first, and also to the Gentile.”** This order was strictly observed by the apostle Paul all his life long, and with glorious results in the interest both of Jews and Gentiles; and as this order has never been reversed or cancelled, we infer that it ought to have been observed all through this dispensation, and ought to be observed to-day. God has thrown His power, available to the Church, along the line of His plan, and His blessing along the line of obedience; so that to miss His plan is to miss His power, and to be disobedient is to lose His blessing.

We have also shown that God has owned and blessed obedient effort to evangelize His beloved Israel, in the conversion of many souls; in making converted Jews a blessing to Gentiles; and in answering prayer and honoring trust for funds to carry on His work, without any personal appeals for subscriptions

It has also been shown that every doctrine vital to Christianity is plainly taught in the Old Testament Scriptures, so that to deny the claims of Christ is to deny or pervert the Old Testament Scriptures on which His claims rest, and by which they are clearly proved.

Suggestions to Christians

Surely all Christians who really and truly love the Lord Jesus Christ, sincerely desire to know the will of God in order to do it.

- We suggest that the entire Word of God should be prayerfully studied to ascertain God's purpose in the Jews: that the terms used by the Holy Spirit to describe the Jews should be understood of the Jews; that the terms used to describe the Gentiles should be understood to mean the Gentiles; and that both promises and threatenings to each respectively should be taken in their plain, literal, and obvious sense.
- We suggest that the prophecies relating to the second advent of our Blessed Lord should be understood in the same sense as those fulfilled predictions relating to His first advent.

- We suggest that in all practical effort to evangelize the world the Divine order, “to **the Jew first,**” should be acted upon, unless it can be shown from the Word of God that this order has been reversed or annulled.
- We also suggest that loving effort should be made to reach with the Gospel those Jews who live near to us, and to whom we may gain neighborly access; that we express to them our deep gratitude to God for the Bible and the Saviour we have received from them; that we give or send them suitable tracts or New Testaments; that we invite them to our places of worship; and that under the impulse of Christ’s love we show them every kindness, that through the mercy shown to us, they also may now obtain mercy.
- We also suggest, in the most kindly and brotherly spirit that evangelical ministers of all denominations should occasionally bring the claims of Israel before their congregations, and give their people an opportunity, at least once a year, of contributing towards the work of God amongst the Jews. Their people might also be encouraged to look after the Jews residing near them.
- We also suggest that monthly prayer meetings on Israel’s behalf be established, as far as possible, in all evangelical churches in London and throughout this and other lands.

In many cities and towns one monthly meeting might be considered sufficient. In that case, of course, Christians of all denominations should be invited, and the local ministers invited to preside in turn and to give a brief address.

Above all we suggest that constant, earnest prayer be presented in the closet and at the family altar by all Christians on Israel’s behalf, but especially on Saturday, the Jewish sabbath, when the Hebrew Scriptures are being read in the synagogues in all lands, and when Missionaries are preaching Christ to numbers of Jews in all parts of the world. Shall we not pray that the Lord will awaken in the Church of Christ such an interest in Israel as is warranted by His own Word; and give such an outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Israel as the Church has never witnessed since apostolic times?

Already God is beginning to answer these prayers in quickened interest in Israel amongst Christians; and in the wonderful movement amongst the Jews as the result of God’s blessing on the free distribution of the Hebrew New Testament, and Scripture portions, amongst the Jews throughout the world, and especially in the Russian empire.

Lastly, we suggest that the New Testament Scriptures and portions should be freely, but discriminately, distributed amongst the Jews throughout the world; and, indeed, amongst the heathen and Mohammedans also.

We shall never get the world evangelized without the Jew; and we shall never get the world supplied with the Word of God by sales.

Consider the hundreds of millions still unevangelized.

Remember that not more than four millions and a half of complete Bibles are produced in one year by all the Bible Societies of Christendom.

Six millions and a half to seven millions are produced, if we include portions, thirty-two of which are counted to make a complete Bible. Say seven millions, including portions, that is, single Gospels and Epistles. Half of these are used up by countries already Christian in name. Then bear in mind that we have an increase of population every year to the number of twelve millions, or one million each month.

When will the world's population be supplied with the Word of God at this rate, when the number of Scriptures, including portions, produced in one year, would not supply two-thirds of the actual increase of population in one year? Is there no possibility of accelerating our speed in supplying the world's population with the precious Word of Life?

The principle of sales versus gifts must be re-examined in the light of the Word of God. Policy says, sell as the rule, give as the exception. This may be conceded where distribution amongst Protestants is concerned, for they know, to some extent, the value of the book, and indeed, in many cases, are simply adding to others already in possession.

Let such by all means pay for them, and indeed all others able and willing to do so. Our concern is not about Christians who have the Bible, and who, for various reasons, wish to possess others and are able and willing to pay for them. Our concern is for those millions who know not the Book, don't want the Book, and have neither love to nor faith in the Book, such as the heathen, the Mohammedan and the Jew in relation to the New Testament and also the very poor in Christian lands unable or unwilling to purchase.

To justify sales, it is said people value what they pay for. A few heathens and Mohammedans purchase the Bible, and a few Jews the New Testament, simply out of curiosity, but none can be expected to value the Scriptures they don't believe in simply because they pay for them. People don't value a thing because they pay for it; but the reverse; they pay for what they value. But they must know the Scriptures to value them. Get the Scriptures as a love-gift into the hands of those who need them, and when blessed by the Holy Spirit to the people's conversion, they will then purchase or subscribe in order to give them to others.

- Others quietly say: you know people don't value that which costs them nothing. Then why not make them pay for wedding, birthday, and other presents?

- Others say: but by sales you get money to purchase more Scriptures. Reply: even Bible Societies admit that it costs much more to sell than to distribute gratuitously.

- Others say: but sales give a better guarantee against waste and destruction. Reply: the reports of Bible Societies tell of numbers bought on purpose to destroy them; so that to sell gives no guarantee against waste.

Unfortunately for this policy of selling the Word of God, even if the policy were sound and economical, it will never succeed in supplying the human family with God's message of love in print; but the strongest count against it is that it practically questions the wisdom of God in giving everything and selling nothing. What does God sell?

- When He counsels to purchase, it is to **“buy wine and milk without money and without price.”**
- God gave His Son, who is **“His unspeakable gift.”**
- With Him he freely gives all things.”
- **“The gift of God is eternal life.”**
- He gives the Holy Spirit.
- **“Every good gift and every perfect boon cometh down from the Father.”**
- Our blessed Lord says **“I have given them Thy Word.”**
- **“Freely ye have received freely give”**—not cheaply sell.

If we are to exact payment for the printed Word, why not also for the spoken message?

If we are justified in withholding the Word of God unless paid for, because some may abuse it, why not withhold the spoken message because some may reject it? Many sinners would much prefer to pay God for salvation, either in supposed good works or in hard cash; but they must either accept salvation as a gift or perish. But having accepted Christ and all He has, as God’s free gift, they may give themselves and all they have as thank-offerings to the Lord. Let the Church of Christ give God’s Word to the world, and evangelize the world through the Jews.

“FIRST TO THE JEW AND ALSO TO THE GENTILE”

~ end of book ~

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